A LIBERAL CASE FOR THE GULF WAR, BY PAUL STARR

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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A SPECIAL ISSUE

Race on campus

In defense of 'the canon'
Irving Howe

The multicultural cult
Fred Siegel

Damaging admissions
Dinesh D'Souza

Learning as a subversive activity
The Editors

Reports from colleges and universities around the nation

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And Robert Brustein on political correctitude in Boston

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CORRESPONDENCE

Counterview

To the editors:

Louis Menand's lengthy discussion of the 1960s counterculture ("Life in the Stone Age," January 7 & 14) never mentions the anti-war movement, but it is impossible to understand one without the other. More than anything else, it was opposition to the war in Vietnam that made a counterculture necessary, and without the anti-war movement, the counterculture would have lacked a moral center.

Bob Dylan is never mentioned by Mr. Menand either, although his fusion of culture and politics in the early '60s was equally important to the creation of the counterculture. Mr. Menand does mention the name of a Bob Dylan song, but only as part of his odd argument that the appropriation of rhythm and blues is the "least indigenous and least authentic thing" about rock 'n' roll.

He writes that "what was most distinctive about late-'60s popular music" was that it was "designed for people to listen to while they were on drugs." What was actually most unusual about this music was its incredible diversity—another hallmark of the counterculture. The simultaneous success of artists as disparate as Laura Nyro, Janis Joplin, Bob Dylan, Tammi Terrell, and Ringo Starr was more distinctive than the way each of them sounded in combination with any controlled substance.

CHARLES KAISER
New York, New York

The writer is the author of *1968 In America.*

Majority leader

To the editors:

A December 24 Notebook item blames Poland's choice of a "presidential" rather than a parliamentary system for the shock of Stanislaw Tyminski's showing in the first round of the election. The real culprit for this shock was the majority runoff method, which raises the prospects for an unknown (as with Alberto Fujimori in Peru) to hope to earn one of two places in the runoff and then be the only option to those who dislike the better-known candidate. With a plurality election, Mr. Tyminski either would never have run at all or would have been a mere also-ran in a race between Lech Walesa and Tadeusz Mazowiecki, with the former probably winning just over 50 percent (instead of the first round 40 percent and his runoff share of over 75 percent, which greatly exaggerates his "mandate").

Poland's system is not really presidential anyway, but rather semi-presidential (like France or Finland), as the president must name a prime minister who can earn the confidence of the parliament.

MATTHEW SHUGART
La Jolla, California

Service charge

To the editors:

As crucial as strict ethics measures are, my experience on both the defense and the offense of ethics enforcement has convinced me that provisions proscribing "the appearance of conflict"—to be found in Common Cause's model ethics law and virtually every state and federal code in America—are problematic at best, and probably unconstitutional ("House of Ill Repute," December 31). The problem is highlighted by your statement that "the rules also require senators to avoid the appearance of this sort of quid pro quo. The [Keating] five created the appearance of impropriety because they acted improperly."

Well, if they acted improperly, then creating the appearance of doing so matters only to the extent that our society is increasingly obsessed with appearances more than realities; if they did *not* act improperly, however, there can be little basis for punishment. It is hard to imagine a regime of due process of law under which a tribunal could find that a man committed no offense but still punish him because the judges disliked "how it looked." Another problem with "appearances" provisions is that *every* action can be questioned by political opponents; if objection from an opponent constitutes proof of a violation, then we have replaced not politics with ethics, but ethics with politics.

The real problem, to which you allude, is how one "clearly distinguishes acceptable constituent casework . . . from improper influence." I doubt that this can be adequately accomplished. Ultimately, unable to distinguish between "constituent service" that's OK (generally, what officials do for run-of-the-mill voters) and that which is "corrupt" (generally, what's done for the *paying* customers), we will have to face the necessity of decoupling services and payment. Since no one should be deprived of government service simply because he contributed to a campaign and thus exercised his constitutional rights, officeholders must simply decline further contributions from any individual or entity whom he or she has

continued on page 65

Washington D.C.'s Chef of the Year 1990
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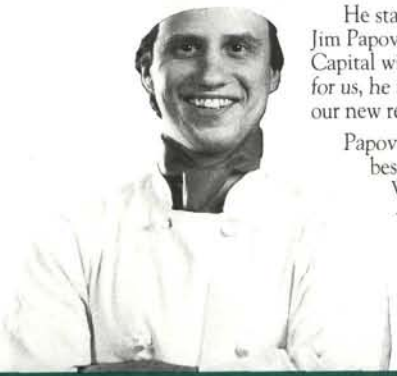

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2 **CORRESPONDENCE** Dylan's strange absence, McCarthy's nasty tactics, &c.

4 **MICHAEL KINSLEY** TRB: DINK STOVER AT WAR What's all this about Bush's WASP values?

6 **THE EDITORS** NOTEBOOK War critics' new complaint, revenge of the Kurds, &c.

8 **PAUL STARR** NO VIETNAM A liberal makes the case for total victory over Iraq.

10 **JAMES WORKMAN** AD NAUSEAM Coverage of the Gulf war is grossing advertisers out.

12 **JOHN CARLIN** BLOOD SOCCER Stompie wasn't Mrs. Mandela's only victim.

14 **MICHAEL KELLY** DESERT RAT Jordan's King Hussein: a team player he ain't.

RACE ON CAMPUS

5 **THE EDITORS** THE DERISORY TOWER The most subversive force in our society is the idea of the university. A radical defense of traditional learning.

18 **KEN EMERSON** ONLY CORRECT Banning free speech at the University of Wisconsin.

19 **JEFF ROSEN** HATE MAIL Yale Law School vs. the First Amendment.

22 **JACOB WEISBERG** THIN SKINS Oberlin students' long, wacky search for 'racism.'

24 **STEPHEN R. BARNETT** GET BACK Berkeley's plantation for minority scholars.

26 **JIM SLEEPER** IN THE MIX Surprising racial harmony at New York's City College.

28 **TAMAR JACOBY** PSYCHED OUT Black students in a seminar on race relations.

30 **DINESH D'SOUZA** SINS OF ADMISSION The trauma of affirmative action on campus.

32 **RICHARD BLOW** MEA CULPA World's most politically incorrect human speaks.

34 **FRED SIEGEL** THE CULT OF MULTICULTURALISM What seems at first to be an affirmation of pluralism is actually the reverse. UGH! OOPS. A lexicon of P.C. no-nos.

40 **IRVING HOWE** THE VALUE OF THE CANON The attack on the corpus of the Western literary tradition by the 'cultural left' isn't really left, and it certainly isn't cultured.

49 **ROBERT BRUSTEIN** ON THEATER: AS THE GLOBE TURNS Multiculturalism has a powerful friend in *The Boston Globe* and its campaign against serious art in the city.

48 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ON FILMS: GLUTTONS FOR PUNISHMENT *The Silence of the Lambs* is pure melodrama; *Heaven and Earth*, from Japan, is pointless.

53 **KATHARINE PARK AND ROBERT A. NYE** DESTINY IS ANATOMY *Making Sex* by Thomas Laqueur

57 **CHRISTOPHER LASCH** BEYOND SENTIMENTALITY *Feminism without Illusions* by Elizabeth Fox-Genovese

61 **ALFRED KAZIN** THE GENERALS IN THE LABYRINTH The memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant and William Tecumseh Sherman, PBS's pictures, and the continuing Civil War craze.

62 **WILLIS BARNSTONE** POEM *Gospel of Declarations by John the Theologian*

66 **ROBERT WRIGHT** NANTUCKET DIARIST: NO MAN IS AN ISLAND The war from afar.

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FROM WASHINGTON

Dink Stover at war

This war, we keep hearing, is a showcase for George Bush's flinty WASP integrity. His mother raised him to be decent, brave, modest, stoic, and straightforward. Henry Stimson addressed his class at Andover, and ever since he's been helping little old ladies to cross the street and poor defenseless countries to repel tyrants. By better than 4-to-1, the rest of us tug our forelocks in meek admiration while Bush leads us into the "next American century," as he put it in his State of the Union.

WASP values are swell. But if Bush has moved his persona back from Texas to Connecticut for the duration of the hostilities, he needs to get his act together on a few fronts.

For example. The new Republican chairman, Clayton Yeutter, trying to prove himself a worthy substitute for William Bennett in the Lee Atwater Chair, has been sniping at Democrats in Congress who voted to give sanctions more time before resorting to bloodshed. So has Bennett himself, who says: "What they showed is they're not capable of any kind of leadership that this country deserves."

Having lost a dignified debate, anti-war Democrats have rallied behind the war effort. But Bennett sees through all that. This gesture is not gracious and patriotic, according to Bennett, but rather "one of the smallest, meanest political acts that I have ever seen" because of an alleged failure to express support for the president as well. "They separated the commander in chief from his troops," Bennett rants semi-coherently.

White House Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater says, with poker-faced hypocrisy that's almost charming: "We don't believe that the Gulf conflict is a partisan issue. On the other hand . . . there was a certain partisanship about the way the votes were cast." In fact, the Democratic leadership leaned over backward *not* to invoke party loyalty. Members were free to vote their own consciences or their own selfish political calculations—and selfish calculation surely did not dictate a vote against the president.

With WASP-worthy stoicism of their own, anti-war Democrats have taken a vow of silence for now concerning their doubts about the enterprise. Senator Bob Kerrey, a Vietnam hero, may understand the costs of war better than Bill Bennett, but he is foreclosed by patriotism from making his case. What does President WASP think about rhetorical Scud attacks by his partisans at such a moment? Would Dink Stover hit a fellow who can't hit back? Gosh, no. And he would curb his Irish wolfhounds, too, rather than looking the other way and pretending to be above it all.

To have opposed the war before it started and yet be eager now for its quick success is perfectly logical but psychologically difficult. It means hoping to be proved wrong. For anti-war Democratic politicians, the strain is even more severe. They know George Bush has now bound himself to the mast of the ship of state. If it goes down, he goes down; if it triumphs, he triumphs. Yet his political opponents unhesitatingly root for the nation. What kind of cad would taunt them?

One such cad, Senator Phil Gramm, has already sent out a fund-raising letter attacking "appeasement-before-country liberals." By contrast to the appeasers, Bush is said by many to believe in the necessity of knocking Saddam off his peg with a righteous Protestant fervor. If anything, he is accused of overpersonalizing the war because of his moral outrage at Hussein's bullying. This is another bit of WASP mythology that grates.

As Peter Galbraith, a Democratic staff member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, puts it: "George Bush did a very convincing Neville Chamberlain before he became Winston Churchill." The facts are well known: how Bush ignored Hussein's gassing to death of thousands of Kurds and how he fought Democratic attempts to impose sanctions against Saddam—whose multiple malefactions Bush now recounts with steely indignation—until the very day Saddam invaded Kuwait.

These earlier mistakes don't make Bush's subsequent actions wrong, of course. But they undermine any pretense that the war we're now engaged in results from the president's admirably simple Sunday school morality. And if points are being awarded for honesty and stoicism, Bush would win a few by admitting that his previous Iraq policy was a dreadful mistake. This would also enhance the moral credibility of his current bellicose approach. Didn't his mother teach him to apologize when you're wrong?

Although I am no expert on WASP morality, I was under the impression it included elements of thrift and self-sacrifice. Yet

continued on page 65

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THE DERISORY TOWER

Scarcely a generation goes by without a "crisis" in the universities. From Gibbon to Bloom the lamentation has become almost a literary genre. It is tempting to believe that if these crises did not exist, it would be necessary for social critics to invent them. Still, they have been real often enough. In our century they have ranged from the malignity of totalitarianism in the 1930s to the insipid demand for skills—of law, business, medicine, even politics—in the 1970s and '80s. Each has warped the integrity of university life, distracted the university from its central task of open-ended, disinterested inquiry. More recently, higher learning has been burdened by the weight of its own growth, by the preference for publishing over teaching, by the logic of bureaucracy.

The most common cause of these recurrent crises has been the demand that the university conform to one orthodoxy or another. Among the roster of opponents of free, subversive thought have been the usual suspects: religion, patriotism, Marxism, materialism, bourgeois propriety. These critiques of the old ideal of free academic inquiry have usually succeeded in making people forget that such freedom is one of the higher and most powerful forms of subversion. And (happily) they have tended to elicit a spirited response in defense of heterodoxy at the heart of university life.

We have devoted so much of this issue of THE NEW REPUBLIC to the subject of race on campus, however, not simply because the newest attack on the idea of a heterodox university is based on a familiar rejection of genuinely pluralist thought, but because it wishes to replace that thought with one of the most destructive and demeaning orthodoxies of our time. This orthodoxy, to summarize the core of the "multiculturalists' " argument, is that race is the determinant of a human being's mind, that the mind cannot, and should not, try to wrest itself from its biological or sociological origins. There are accounts in these pages both of the curriculum's transformation to conform to the dogma of race and of a revolution in admissions, faculty hiring, lecturing, writing, speaking, and thinking to reflect this assumption.

This is not merely a philosophical quarrel. On America's campuses today the issue of race is unavoidable. The impact of affirmative action upon the tenor of even the simplest class discussion is profound. Resentful whites jostle uncomfortably with suspicious minority students, struggling with situations they find personally overwhelming. Well-qualified blacks and Hispanics feel the need to prove their worth, or are wracked with the suspicion that they may not owe their place to merit. Hour upon hour of precious faculty time is spent soothing racial sensitivities or deconstructing the canon on ethnic lines. Deep-rooted racism—which still undoubtedly and regrettably exists on campus—blurs with legitimate reactions to the imposition of "political correctness." Our universities, which should strive for an identity in contradistinction to the world at large, have become distillations of our bitterest social divisions.

At the bottom of this dispute is an idea that is worth tackling at its roots. In its most popular form, "multiculturalism" holds that the traditional idea of free thought is an illusion propagated by the spoilers of freedom, by the relations of power that obtain in any given society. It holds, more specifically, that the old liberal notion of freedom is only a sentimental mask of a power structure that is definitionally oppressive of those who are not white Western males. And this ideological and methodological principle is not merely a cautionary note to be taken into account when studying the established texts of Western civilization; it is, in the hands of the "multiculturalists," the very meaning of—the deepest truth about—those texts. (Sometimes their argument is further complicated by the notion that no stable meaning at all can be attributed to texts, but we leave that issue to the junior faculty.) The university should therefore be devoted to blowing the whistle on those texts, to replacing them with those that identify and transcend this white male oppression, and indeed go beyond mere study to the actual defeat of the racial and sexual structure of society at large.

"Multiculturalism" turns out, then, to be neither multi nor cultural. In practice, its objective is a unanimity of thought on campus that, if successful, would ef-

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fectively end open exchange—exchange that would have to include the alleged representatives of patriarchy—and reduce the nuances of culture to the determinants of race. True multiculturalism, which we applaud and hope to see flourish, would, in contrast, set no borders to texts and ideas, histories and cultures, lives and images, from worlds alien to our own. It would attempt to account for the social and political context in *all* texts, as rigorous criticism must do. (Which texts, in what language, from which society, do not come to us from the midst of terrible relations of power? Certainly not the texts of the East.) It would assume, as a matter of philosophical principle, that at least inner independence, freedom of thought and imagination, may be attributed to great writers and artists in *all* societies, however repressive.

We are opposed to the current "multiculturalist" trend, then, not because we believe that accounting for sexual, racial, and political bias in text is not a worthwhile (though limited) intellectual exercise, but because we believe that it is not the *only* worthwhile intellectual exercise. What the "multiculturalist" criticism of the canon fails to grasp is that the canon is itself a cacophony, that it teaches not certainty but doubt, that it presents not a single Western doctrine about the true or the good or the beautiful, but an internecine Western war between different accounts of those values, which will rattle the student more than it will ever reassure her. The idea that Plato and Heidegger, Proust and Thucydides, Hegel and Freud are somehow intellectual equivalents because of their sex, race, and class is absurd, and evaporates upon inspection. Indeed, many of the fathers of the "multiculturalist" church—Derrida, Foucault, Nietzsche, Gramsci—are themselves white males. How did they get away unscathed? Or does their work, too, express, however unwittingly, nothing but the social and sexual biases of their time and place?

The university that we defend is a truly subversive institution. It is devoted to the pursuit of inquiry, with no end in sight, and with no justification except its own curiosity. It is dedicated to the life of the mind as a radically undetermined adventure, a ship on an endless and bottomless sea, open to all breezes (even multiculturalist breezes), deft in all currents, with no particular destination, and no harbor in sight. Soon, we hope, those who share this vision—the real subversives in our universities—will emerge to defend it against the racial dogmatists. We have confidence that they will prevail, not least because students get impatient with the platitudes of political orthodoxy, but also because they will provide the proper context for the genuine insights of multiculturalism to be appreciated. We have no doubt that Foucault, Derrida, et al. are worthy of study. Their ideas are not contemptible, and they have the old virtue of being dangerous.

Our quarrel with today's "multiculturalism," however, is based not only on a concern for thinking and teaching in the university, but also on a concern for tackling the real issue of race relations in our country. To be blunt, we do not believe that racism will ever finally be defeated by a sophisticated version of its own logic. An orthodoxy that prefers those texts that are racially pure, and advances those students whose race—and race alone—entitles them to study them, is one that will never free people from the iniquities of racial prejudice. It may even serve to entrench these habits of thought (or non-thought), as angry whites and angry blacks battle each other over the remnants of each other's pride.

The furor over affirmative action in admissions and hiring in our universities and over a "multicultural" curriculum is, in fact, a bitterly ironic distraction from the battle against racial injustice in our society at large. While students and academics squabble over whether to include Alice Walker in a freshman reading list, a whole generation of black and Hispanic children is mired in a culture of poverty, dependency, and crime, which our government has neither the honesty nor the will to address appropriately. High school education for many inner-city blacks and Hispanics is affected by this culture as well. Without confronting this issue baldly, and taking the uncomfortable measures to tackle it, the "multicultural" posturings in our colleges are at best the indulgence of an elite, at worst cynically destructive.

The real danger is that the "multicultural" orthodoxy is itself a disguise for an indifference, or a particular political attitude, to this greater issue. It whispers in our ears that the barriers of race are unbridgeable; that thought cannot undo them; that education cannot mitigate them; that a liberal government in a liberal society cannot do anything to achieve a more colorblind society; that racism is, indeed, ineradicable. It is the inheritance of liberals to resist this seduction, not only because it is a temptation to intellectual orthodoxy, but also because it is a temptation to political despair.

NOTEBOOK

BUNKERED DOWN: There's some irony in the fact that those who argued for delaying war against Iraq for as long as possible are now complaining that it isn't ending fast enough. In fact, they're partly responsible for the problem. The real obstacles to ending the Gulf war quickly are the defenses Saddam was able to construct while the West gave peace a chance. The five-and-a-half months between August 2 and January 16 allowed Iraq to build more fortifications for its airplanes, tanks, and communications (as well as spanking new bunkers in Kuwait), dig in its supplies, bury or camouflage its weapons, and provide cover for its half-million troops in the war zone. Since the air battle could have begun quite efficiently early in October, as we urged editorially last summer, every day after that was a gift to Iraq. It will cost the allies much in the days ahead, bringing a longer

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WHERE WE STAND

By Albert Shanker, President of the American Federation of Teachers

Debating War in the Persian Gulf and...

The Uses of History

When members of Congress met in the tremendous debate about authorizing war against Iraq, their arguments and counterarguments were full of references to history. Members talked about Socrates and Abraham Lincoln; the Mexican-American War and the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta in the fifth century B.C.E. They cited St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, James Madison and Winston Churchill. Some talked about the appeasement of Hitler at Munich and Mussolini in Ethiopia; others about the Tonkin Gulf resolution that led to our deep entanglement in the Vietnam War.

This was not a way of fancying up their speeches for an important occasion or showing off their learning in a Congressional version of Trivial Pursuit. When it came to this critical moment, members of Congress drew on history to help them think about and explain the decision they were making—to each other and to the American people.

Sen. Dale Bumpers of Arkansas explained why he was in favor of patience and giving the sanctions more time to work with a story about Robert E. Lee riding away from Appomattox Courthouse over a battlefield where the dead still lay and saying to himself, "... All this could have been avoided. All we needed to avoid this war were a few men of courage, of vision and forebearance."

Rep. Stephen Solarz of New York rejected the appeal for patience with an account of what preceded the U.S. entry to World War II: "We were patient when Japan invaded Manchuria in 1931. We were patient when Germany blitzkrieged Poland in 1939. We were patient when Germany overran France in 1940. We were patient... right up to Dec. 7, 1941, when Japan attacked us at Pearl Harbor, by which time Germany had conquered almost all of Europe and Japan controlled much of Asia."

Different people drew different lessons from history because, as Sen. William Cohen of Maine said, the past offers "no absolutes, no blueprints... that will provide a clear guide to the right decision." History was a tool the speakers used to reason and think about the crisis in the Persian Gulf. They used it to frame the debate about what the U.S. should do and to make clear exactly where they stood. And they used it to help the American people, to whom they were also speaking, understand the issues.

No one could have followed the debates or had an intelligent opinion about the wisest course of action in the Gulf without at least a basic knowledge of history. And that made me wonder how much longer we'll be able to count on Americans' grasp of history and, therefore, on our ability to make intelligent decisions about the present and the future of our country. In fact, I wonder if we can count on the grasp of our young adults now.

There is a lot of discussion about what sort of education will best prepare students for the world of tomorrow. People are preoccupied with the rapid pace of change. They look at new technology, at the information revolution, at the expansion of knowledge in many fields and ask: "What's the point of teaching kids a particular body of knowledge? Things students learn today will be obsolete or irrelevant the day after tomorrow. Anyway, they can look up what they need to know."

History is especially vulnerable to these questions about the value of content in a changing world. Many people are already mistaken about what it is. They think history is just a bunch of old facts and dates instead of a collection of stories about important episodes in our past. You have to know the facts, but understanding the stories involves a lot more than that because they tell about patterns of events and human motivations—about the times when people were weak or strong; when they showed patience or needed to show it and failed.

As the members of Congress debated about the best way to deal with the Persian Gulf crisis, you could see that their knowledge of history gave them a common set of understandings. These understandings allowed them to talk together about the issues even when they were coming to different conclusions, just the way people who know numbers and are dealing with the same ones can sometimes end up with different answers and different analyses. And these understandings are as important to our political life as a common language or languages because without them discussion is not possible.

So when kids say, "Why should I study history?" one of the answers is so they can become good citizens—so they can participate in and understand debates like the one on the Persian Gulf and thus help ensure that such debates continue. (And so they won't be like some of the young people we're hearing on radio and television right now—the ones who've gotten their opinions about the world and the war from slogans and 30-second news tidbits and who are glad to shout these opinions into any microphone thrust in their faces.)

But it's more than that. This debate, which was one of the high points in our recent history, showed how exciting—and even essential—it can be to apply ideas to events and to grope for solutions. It would be a good thing for our kids to be prepared for that, too.

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air war and a bloodier ground war than would have been the case if we'd dealt with Saddam sooner. Such is the price a dilatory democracy pays for the wars it occasionally has to fight.

REVENGE OF THE KURDS: The Soviet Union isn't the only imperial unit George Bush wants to hold together. Judging from his recent statements, Iraq is also sacrosanct. No doubt he's been on the phone with Hosni Mubarak, the president of Egypt, whose foreign minister recently declared that he is not in favor of a postwar change of government in Iraq. The purported reason for this unexpected burst of magnanimity is to maintain a Gulf balance of power. But the real reason is closer to home. It has to do with Sunni power throughout the Arab world. In most Arab states, including Egypt, the ascendancy serves to stymie political pluralism. In Iraq, it's a means of controlling the vast majority of Shiite Iraqis. Why should the United States be in favor of its maintenance? The Iraqi body politic is really three bodies politic: the Shiites, the Kurds, and, last and least, the ruling Sunnis. (There used to be many Assyrians but they were murdered, and the many Jews were driven out.) They have little in common with one another except the Sunni tyranny that rules all of them. Saddam Hussein is right about one thing: the borders of Iraq are the last great contrivance of British imperialism. There is nothing logical or sacred about the country. War, as Edmund Burke put it, "never leaves where it found a country." Sunni-controlled Iraq started this war by annexing Kuwait. It would be poetic anti-imperialist justice if it ended the conflict by losing the Kurds and the Shiites.

BAKER WATCH: On January 29 George Bush announced in his State of the Union address that there could be "no pause now that Saddam has forced the world into war." He promised that "we will stay the course and . . . succeed all the way." Maybe he should have a chat with his secretary of state, James Baker. Mr. Baker, who was fishing with Eduard Shevardnadze when Iraq invaded Kuwait, and who has distanced himself from the president at every stage of the crisis, now, in the heat of battle, chooses to schmooze with Mr. Shevardnadze's successor as Soviet foreign minister, Alexander Bessmertnykh. The result? A communiqué that not only winks at Soviet repression in the Baltics but also undermines the president's implicit goal of pursuing the war until Saddam's defeat, by suggesting the war would end merely with a commitment by Saddam to withdraw from Kuwait, followed by concrete steps to that end. Put aside for a minute the risks to troop morale of softening war aims in the middle of conflict. At what point does Mr. Baker's long record of compromising the president's war policies become disloyalty? Reports suggest that George Bush was peeved on this occasion by his underling's apparent pursuit of a separate agenda. Maybe it's time the president realized that this is what Mr. Baker has been doing all along. ●

A liberal case for war.

NO VIETNAM

By Paul Starr

It is a regime, we all now understand, that ruthlessly murders its opponents, gasses minorities, channels its oil riches into military power, builds biological and nuclear weapons, invades one neighbor and then pillages and annexes another, rains missiles on civilian populations in yet a third country to spread terror and inflame religious hatreds, threatens an entire region with vital resources for the world—a regime, in short, unequivocally offensive and threatening to liberal values and America's legitimate interests. Yet many liberals in America today, if they do not actively oppose the war against Iraq, give it reluctant support. And some who now accept the war after opposing it beforehand want it kept to minimal objectives.

The critics and doubters include many of my friends, but I won't be signing their anti-war petitions. Since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, I have found myself among the minority of liberal Democrats who have favored the president's policies against Iraq, including his decision to go to war. Now, as the debate over our war aims and strategy grows more intense, I find myself among those who believe that we should not restrict our objectives to dislodging the Iraqis from Kuwait, or limit our means to air power. Would that the war could be won from the air. But if it cannot, we must finish it on the ground, perhaps by using our air superiority to keep the Iraqis pinned down in Kuwait while feigning thrusts there and sending ground troops to secure the one objective that provides hope of a decisive victory—overturning the Baathist regime in Baghdad and central Iraq.

When the memory of fascism and World War II was still fresh, there would have been no mystery in liberal support for the use of force against an actively expansionary regime that has all the old hallmarks of totalitarianism: a one-party state, rule through terror, worship of the supreme leader, dedication of all resources to military aggression, disregard of the elementary principles of international law and common decency. The real historical puzzle is the reverse. With the U.S. action invited by the victim of aggression, authorized by the United Nations, and supported by all the major political parties in the major nations of the world, why are so many American liberals ambivalent and others outright opposed?

There seem to me two kinds of reasons—overgeneralized lessons of recent history and reasonable but, I think, mistaken prudential judgments.

The Vietnam War is obviously a large part of the

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explanation. Vietnam is to Iraq as World War I was to World War II. The widespread pacifism of the 1930s reflected the sense of war's futility left by World War I. Even after World War II broke out, many Americans on the left as well as the right were slow to grasp the meaning of Nazi Germany and the need for America to fight. Similarly, the Vietnam War was the formative experience for many Americans' judgments about armed force and the armed forces. The circumstances are now different from Vietnam, but the responses are still the same. Is it true, as a friend suggests, that war protesters always fight the last war? Alas, some now are.

I see in the faces of anti-war protesters and hear in their voices the same expressions and outlook that I remember twenty years ago when I took part in anti-war demonstrations. But this time the objections sound hollow. *We need the money we're spending on the war to solve problems at home*: We certainly do need to solve problems here, but the war against Iraq is not what has kept or will keep us from solving them. *The government we're aiding is no democracy*: But the Kuwaitis have been brutalized, their nation expropriated—and rectifying that injustice is just the occasion for the allied response, not the whole purpose of it. *We should keep trying negotiations*: We did for months, and there was not the slightest sign the Iraqis were interested.

And then there is the ubiquitous slogan, *No blood for oil*, as if we were fighting for the small and demeaning purpose of cheap gasoline. Oil matters, no mistake about it. But the importance of oil lies in the power that the control of even greater oil wealth would confer on Saddam—power that he has shown every intent of using to expand his sphere of domination. Are the protesters who want to "bring the troops home" simply indifferent to the domination that Saddam would impose over the people of the Mideast? Or are they unable to follow the chain of consequences to where an American withdrawal would logically lead?

The power that Saddam could accumulate if he controlled the Mideast oil fields—and the havoc he could wreak regionally and internationally—is specifically what distinguishes Iraq from other unsavory regimes. I am not saying we are obligated to serve as the "world's policeman" and overturn every evil government. But where a vicious regime threatens to accumulate power that will overwhelm our friends and jeopardize our vital interests, we have both material and moral reasons, acting in concert with other nations, to intervene with force. Unlike Vietnam, the hard tests of just intervention have in this case been met.

The more serious and troubling arguments against the war—and against raising our war aims to include toppling Saddam—come from those who have objected, on prudential grounds, to shifting from the defense of Saudi Arabia to an offensive posture. Despite the onset of the war, the prudential objections still affect sentiment about the justice of the war and its legitimate aims.

Before January 16 there was a difficult judgment to be made about the potential success of alternatives to war, principally economic sanctions. Some hoped that sanctions could actually bring about an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait; some saw them only as weakening Saddam militarily and thereby making it easier for us to prevail later. But even if the sanctions had caused Saddam to retreat from Kuwait (which seems highly implausible), such a retreat might well have been merely tactical and temporary, until the United States pulled out and he gained nuclear arms. The embargo never could have disabled and disarmed the Iraqi military and, therefore, never adequately answered the threat the regime poses.

But what of a really long embargo and collective security arrangement to offset Iraqi power? While some of the war's opponents have taken our failure in Vietnam as a warning against all American military intervention, others have cited our success in the cold war in making the case for prolonged sanctions and the patient containment of Iraq. We may, in fact, need to return to such a strategy, perhaps after driving Iraq out of Kuwait. However, the success of a long embargo depends not just on the support of our partners in the military coalition, but also on the cooperation of Iran. Since Iran could single-handedly undo the sanctions by acting as an intermediary for Iraqi oil, the long embargo strategy sits on exceptionally shaky foundations. To have made it our whole strategy against Iraq would have been a mistake.

The precedent of the cold war, moreover, is not exactly encouraging: nearly half a century of large-scale military deployment, while Eastern Europe suffered under Communist domination. Kuwait's fate might be more like Latvia's than Hungary's, particularly given the vast displacement of the Kuwaiti population.

Those who saw the embargo as a short- or intermediate-term means of weakening the Iraqi military by depriving it of spare parts and other critical resources may have had a better argument. Ultimately, however, this justification for longer reliance on sanctions was an argument only over the timing of a war, not whether to fight it. For an embargo expected to achieve military advantage could have avoided war only if the threat to go to war were genuine—and had we delayed, and delayed, the threat would not have seemed genuine at all.

In the argument over our war aims and strategy, we are now replaying in different terms the original argument over whether to fight. Assuming that Saddam does not accept James Baker's offer of a ceasefire in exchange for Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, we have at least three alternatives: limiting ourselves to an air war, which would not necessarily liberate Kuwait; a combined air-ground attack to force the Iraqis out of Kuwait; and an air war followed by a ground invasion of Iraq itself to overturn the Baathist regime.

Limiting the war to an air campaign has clear attractions. Like the embargo, it has the great virtue of minimizing American casualties. The air war is a kind of stepped-up embargo that not only prevents Iraq from adding to its weaponry, but actively subtracts from it. An air war is, indeed, what we should fight—for weeks, months—as long as it advances our strategic goals.

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Yet while allied air superiority will be the key to military victory, it seems unlikely to be sufficient for it, unless we are content to inflict a lot of damage on Iraqi installations and infrastructure and then go home. To expect the air war to bring about an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait is to pray for unpredictable changes—a collapse of Iraqi will or of the regime itself. We may wish for both to happen, but we cannot count on them.

In the midst of a war it is virtually impossible for those of us who watch, listen, and read about it to reach any informed judgment about how it should most effectively be pursued. Only the president and his commanders can make those decisions. But we do have some reasonable basis for judging what goals they ought to be pursuing, and those goals do bear on the way the war is fought.

The big purpose of this war is to disable the Iraqi will to power and to free the entire region from the threat of Iraqi domination. By demolishing much of its military capability, we are taking a step in that direction. But it is only a step and could easily be reversed in a few years' time. If Saddam's regime survives this war, he will have been magnified by it into a figure of grand proportions and his regime will more than likely be capable of regenerating its military power out of future oil revenues. Air strikes will not destroy the weapons designs that the Iraqis already possess. Nor should we imagine that Saddam will learn the lessons we want him to learn from a limited defeat in Kuwait. In fact, what we consider to be a defeat for him, he and others in the Arab world may well consider a victory, tempting them into illusions of the ultimate revenge—striking back directly at the United States in yet a future war.

Inevitably, no matter what the outcome, we are now going to face smoldering, perhaps burning, passions for revenge. But it is unclear whether those passions will be more dangerous to us if we fight a limited war in Kuwait, which leaves Saddam in place, or press on for a complete victory, which seeks to liberate Iraq itself and aims at a more comprehensive reconstruction of regional security afterward.

Nor is it clear to me that a war to liberate Iraq is inherently more difficult than a war to liberate Kuwait. For, after all, what guarantee is there that Saddam will stop fighting even after we drive his forces out of Kuwait? He seems unlikely to negotiate or surrender under any circumstances. Nor, for fear of their lives, are his commanders likely to give up—that is, as long as we have yet to deal with Saddam and his top leadership. Removing that leadership, seizing their capital, may be the most expeditious means of getting the Iraqi army in the south to capitulate.

The Iraqi army in Kuwait and southern Iraq is dug into heavily fortified positions; this is the ground they have chosen, and it will be hard to dislodge them from it. On the other hand, the more they move out of their defensive positions, the more vulnerable they make themselves to air power. The alternative, therefore, is to lure some of those divisions out of their defensive positions and to pin down and bypass the bulk of them, while attacking Baghdad directly and overseeing the establishment of a constitutional government there as we did in Germany and Japan after World War II. We may wish it were not so—that there will be some secure conclusion to this war short of the road to Baghdad or, for that matter, to Kuwait City—but this is the enterprise into which we may now be ineluctably drawn.

To be sure, a direct assault on Baghdad, bypassing Kuwait, entails large political as well as military risks, particularly the possibility that Iran might begin actively aiding Iraq, if not actually fighting with it. Here intelligence and diplomacy will be critical in deciding whether a complete victory is achievable. I suggest only that if the president makes such a choice, he ought to have our support.

Last fall, shortly after the Iraqi crisis erupted, millions of Americans watched the week-long PBS series on the Civil War. While graphically portraying the war's horrors, the series also reminded us that some wars are indeed worth fighting, and that the determined pursuit of victory may be morally as well as strategically preferable to circumscribed battles aimed at forcing negotiations. Are we better served by a McClellan, whose desire to avoid casualties ends up prolonging a war, or by a Grant, who doggedly pursues an unconditional victory? Today America has a leadership that appears to be emulating Grant rather than McClellan, and for my own part, dangerous as this war is, I am glad of it.

PAUL STARR, a co-editor of *The American Prospect*, teaches at Princeton University.

Madison Avenue's anti-war movement.

AD NAUSEAM

By James Workman

As war broke out on January 16, a strange prime-time phenomenon took place. A record-breaking 72.7 million Americans turned on their televisions for live news from the Gulf; for the same reason, dozens of major advertisers hastened to drop off the air. Advertisers say they're afraid their upbeat messages will be undermined if they're framed by unscheduled news updates with graphic messages of death, casualties, and destruction. In their effort to save revenue, the networks could soon be forced to tone down or limit the news, which would mean that the real censorship in this war may come at the behest not of the generals, but of the ad executives.

The networks have guaranteed advertisers that their spots, according to Lou Bullock, program services manager for the international ad agency BBDO Worldwide,

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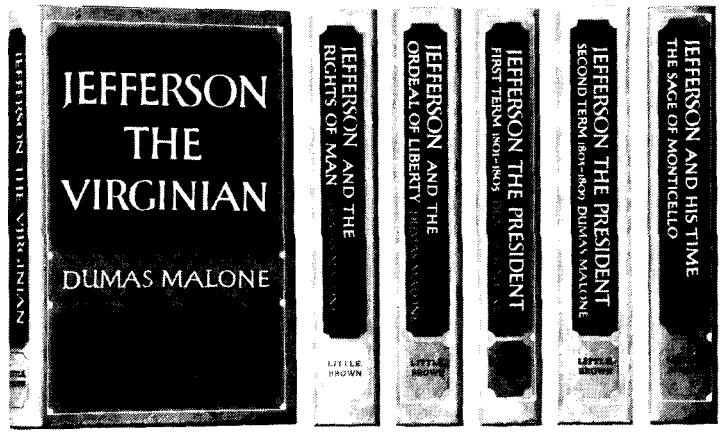

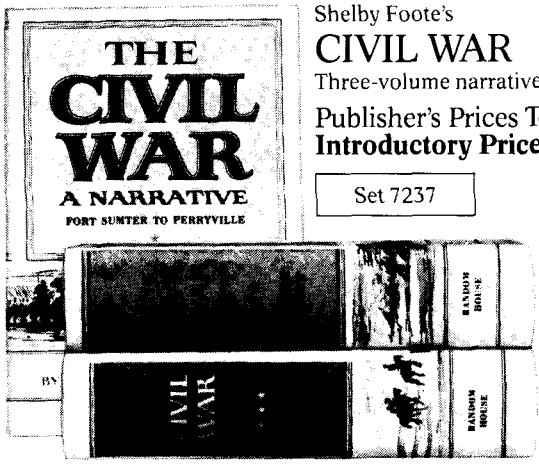

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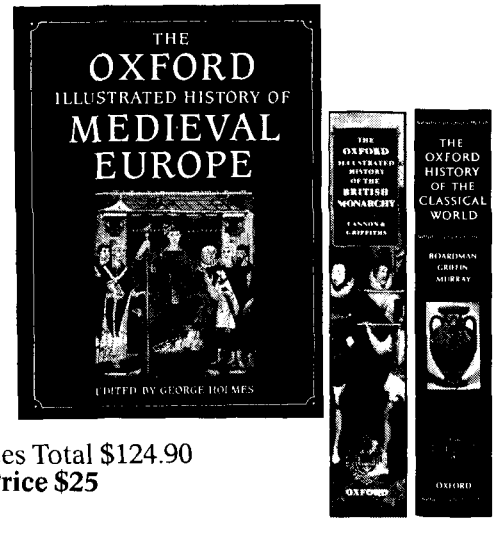

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"would not be set directly adjacent to grisly footage of war." But Madison Avenue has already had some unfortunate segues. In the first week of the war CNN aired a report on the Tel Aviv missile attack that included a demonstration on how locals can minimize skin damage caused by gas. The next commercial? Vaseline Intensive Care, "to reduce that itchy, burning sensation." At the close of the Super Bowl broadcast, ABC aired an ad touting Exxon's new "cleansing" gasoline, then shot to a news flash: "More on the Gulf oil spill, tonight at eleven."

The biggest pullout so far has come from airline and oil companies, which, in addition to taste, worry about oil embargoes and terrorist threats: in the first days of war, nearly every major airline and oil company canceled, suspended, or altered the messages of their multimillion-dollar TV ad campaigns. Chevron, for example, has deferred more than $300,000 worth of ads "to reassess the situation, and the appropriateness of promoting gasoline during the crisis." Texaco's commercials now urge viewers to reduce reliance on foreign oil by conserving more.

Among the top corporate advertisers, the degree of withdrawal varies. Procter & Gamble Co., with more than 100 different consumer products (Tide, Pampers, Ivory, etc.), decided to remove all commercials from unscheduled newscasts. Johnson & Johnson, Sears Roebuck, and Philip Morris all canceled ads during the first days of war coverage, and have resumed them now on a tentative basis. During the Super Bowl, the Coca-Cola Company didn't take any chances. After the fourth quarter, a somber voice announced that "due to the crisis in the Middle East, the Coca-Cola Company did not feel it would be appropriate to show the original, upbeat commercial" for its "crack the code" giveaway game. Instead, information on the winning tickets was simply scrolled across a red screen.

The jitters in the ad industry carry a hefty price tag for the networks, since advertisers can cancel up to 50 percent of their scheduled TV ads without paying any penalty. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, NBC lost $3 million in the first twelve hours of the war, as news pre-empted some commercials and others were pulled. Five days later CBS lost $400,000 in one hour when it aired a Special Report instead of prime-time entertainment. Compounded by the recession, these losses may multiply as the war drags on. So far, this has not led to major shifts in war coverage. News footage has been relatively tame, limited to aerial shots released by military spokesmen. But as the war heats up, acknowledges BBDO's Bullock, more companies may pull their ads.

The alternative for the networks, of course, is to avoid the danger of clashes by reducing, sanitizing, or postponing ugly footage—or simply sticking with domestic entertainment. It's happened before. In 1966 CBS News president Fred Friendly began to broadcast the historic Fulbright hearings on Vietnam. Unfortunately, the live coverage devoured $175,000 worth of ad revenue (the equivalent of roughly under $1 million today). Top business executives at CBS decided the news wasn't worth it; the hearings had already cut through the morning "Captain Kangaroo" and threatened to overlap afternoon entertainment as well. Just before the testimony of George F. Kennan began, the hearings were replaced with a fifth rerun of "I Love Lucy."

Naturally, executives from all four networks deny anything like this would take place again. But others in the broadcast industry remain skeptical. And financial stress on local affiliates could be overpowering. "Economically, the greatest pressure [to drop news coverage for entertainment] is on the affiliates. While the networks are more public-service oriented and operate at a deficit, the local affiliates are extremely profitable," says media critic Ben H. Bagdikian. When forced to choose between public news or high-revenue entertainment, the affiliates historically choose the latter. And these days, with the miracles of satellite technology, what the affiliates say, goes. ●

Mrs. Mandela goes to trial.

BLOOD SOCCER

By John Carlin

JOHANNESBURG

Winnie Mandela is a busy woman these days. She has more jobs than her husband. He is merely deputy president and de facto leader of the African National Congress. She is an officeholder in four ANC departments: interim head of the ANC Women's League; member of the ANC's executive leadership in the Pretoria/Johannesburg region; chair of her local ANC branch in Soweto; and ANC head of Social Welfare. No one doubts that Mrs. Mandela holds these portfolios merely because of her marriage. And although Mr. Mandela has not directly influenced his wife's rise, after twenty-seven years in prison, he dotes on her, giving her subtle power over the ANC as a whole. She even deems herself a spokeswoman for the movement, recently launching a personal tirade against American military intervention in the Persian Gulf.

None of this would be intolerable for Mrs. Mandela's colleagues were it not for her highly dubious personal record on human rights. On February 4 she stands trial on four charges of kidnapping and four of assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm. Lawyers say she faces a potential prison sentence of fifteen years.

The evidence against Mrs. Mandela that surfaced in court during the trial last year of one of her closest lieutenants, Jerry Richardson, was very damaging. Richardson was the "coach" of the Mandela United Foot-

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ball Club, a supposed soccer team consisting of young bodyguards-cum-vigilantes she formed in 1986. He was found guilty of the January 1989 murder of a 14-year-old ANC activist, Stompie Moeketsi. But the allegations brought against Mrs. Mandela in the Soweto community go far beyond the events in late December 1988, when Mr. Richardson abducted Stompie and three other boys and brought them to Mrs. Mandela's home for a succession of heavy beatings. (The boys had been staying at a Methodist mission house in Soweto under the supervision of a white minister who was rumored to have sexually abused them. The beatings apparently were in retribution for having engaged in taboo sexual activity with the minister.) The first clue, in fact, that many more sinister things lurked behind Mrs. Mandela's "football club" was provided, most convincingly, from within the ANC alliance itself.

On February 16, 1989, a day after Stompie's body was identified by the police, the most senior political and trade union leaders loyal to the ANC called a press conference. Murphy Morobe, then acting general secretary of the United Democratic Front, read a statement. "We have now reached the state," he began, "where we have no option but to speak publicly on what is a very sensitive and painful matter. In recent years Mrs. Mandela's actions have led her into conflict with various sections of the oppressed people. . . . In particular, we are outraged by the reign of terror that the [soccer] team has been associated with." He added that Stompie would still be alive had it not been for the team.

Significantly, the statement spoke of a reign of terror not "in recent weeks" but "in recent years." This tantalizing hint was dropped—and then nothing. Never since has anyone connected to the ANC spoken in an official capacity against Mrs. Mandela. Unofficially, however, the conspiracy of silence has begun to crack. Stirred to outrage by the honors heaped upon Mrs. Mandela, in particular her appointment as ANC Social Welfare chief, some people have dared to talk.

Lerothodi Ikaneng, for example, a member of the football club since its inception at the end of 1986, gave me a detailed chronicle of alleged criminal abuses; Dudu Chili, a veteran ANC loyalist, says her house was burned down by "Winnie's boys"; Mrs. Msoni says the soccer team shot dead her 13-year-old daughter, Finky; and Mr. Sono says the last time he saw his 14-year-old son was in November 1988, badly beaten nd in the presence of Mrs. Mandela.

Apart from these statements, remarkable evidence has surfaced in the court records of the Johannesburg Supreme Court implicating Mrs. Mandela in criminal actions. A question arises as to why the police did not take action against her earlier. There was, for instance, what was to become known as "the Seheri case." Oupa Seheri, as Ikaneng recalled, was a trained ANC guerrilla who had been staying at Mrs. Mandela's home at the time of his arrest in January 1987. Ikaneng and other football team members who had been staying there too were arrested in connection with a double murder of which Seheri was found guilty in court a year later. (In the end Ikaneng was not charged.) The court record says that Seheri regarded Mrs. Mandela's as a safe place in which to keep weapons, that he had obtained the particular weapon in question—a Scorpion pistol—from the bedroom of Mrs. Mandela's daughter Zindzi, and that his two accomplices in the murders were staying at Mrs. Mandela's. Curiously, neither Mrs. Mandela nor her daughter was ever called as a witness at the Seheri trial.

One of Seheri's accomplices, Charles Zwane, who received a suspended sentence, remained over the years a part of Mrs. Mandela's coterie. On November 17 last year Zwane was sentenced to death on nine counts of murder. Zwane's lawyer, as part of an unsuccessful plea for mitigation of sentence, said that he had come under the influence of Mrs. Mandela's dominant personality. Again, Mrs. Mandela was not called as a witness.

One of the people Zwane killed was Finky Msoni. Her mother recalled that on the evening of February 22, 1989, her son Thabiso came rushing into her home to tell her that "Winnie's boys" had surrounded the house of her neighbor and sister-in-law, Dudu Chili. Finky was there at the time watching television. The "boys" opened fire on the house and hurled petrol bombs. Finky was shot dead and the house was gutted.

Mrs. Chili had had the good fortune to be taken in by the police that night in connection with the murder of a member of the football team, Maxwell Madondo, nine days earlier, on February 13. The post-mortem report revealed that Madondo's head had been smashed by repeated blows with a rock. Mrs. Chili's son, Sibusiso, was found guilty of the murder by a Johannesburg court a year ago. But he avoided the death penalty, receiving a jail sentence of only one year. The judge found that he had acted in self-defense because Madondo had been dispatched by the football team to kill him.

In the most incriminating piece of evidence against Mrs. Mandela ever heard in court, defense and prosecution agreed on a joint statement that passed unchallenged. "The admission the State will make is that the deceased, Maxwell Madondo, was a member of the Mandela football club and that a decision was made by Mrs. Winnie Mandela and the football club to kill accused number one, Chili, and accused number six, Ikaneng." The "deceased," Madondo, the court further heard, had been "mandated" together with another club member to carry out the killings.

An attempt had already been made on Ikaneng's life. He had proved to be a rebellious member of the football team, refusing to bow to strict rules of discipline enforced by Mrs. Mandela in a household that was part boarding school, part military barracks, part prison. Ikaneng had also witnessed the murder of another club member, Tholi, late in 1988 outside a Soweto bar. According to Ikaneng, the murderer was Sizwe Sithole, the boyfriend of Zindzi Mandela and the head of the football team's disciplinary committee. (Sithole was

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found hanged in a police cell a year ago. A judicial inquiry found that he had done so out of remorse, having revealed substantial incriminating evidence against Mrs. Mandela to the police.) Ikaneng says he went into hiding for six weeks, after receiving a sound beating from Mrs. Mandela herself. On the evening of the day he reappeared in Soweto, January 3, 1989 (just after Stompie's death), he came across Stompie's killer, Jerry Richardson. Richardson was accompanied by eight or ten others. "I thought they were going to shoot me," Ikaneng recalled. "They pushed me to the ground and Jerry sat on my stomach. One boy had the disconnected blades of some garden shears in his hands. Jerry told him to stab me with the blade, but he didn't have the nerve. Jerry took it and pushed the blade into my neck." Ikaneng was left for dead, and Richardson was found guilty eighteen months later of the attempted murder.

One criminal case involving the football team has not yet come to trial. Lolo Sono, another Soweto youth, was last seen, severely beaten, in the company of Mrs. Mandela and club members on November 13, 1988. Sono's father vividly remembers a conversation that day with Mrs. Mandela, who was sitting in the front seat of a van with the boy in the back, his eyes swollen. "I tried to plead with her: 'OK, you can leave him with me.' She said, 'No, I'm not going to leave him, I'm taking him with me—the movement will see what to do.' And when Lolo tried to talk, she kept telling him to shut up. Then Winnie said they are taking him away. That's all she told me when she went."

Apart from this unresolved "disappearance," all in all fifteen murders can be attributed to former members of the football team, three of whom—Seheri, Richardson, and Zwane—are now on Pretoria's Death Row. Nevertheless, Mr. Mandela, believing that his wife was loyal to him during his imprisonment, remains loyal to her—as does the ANC leadership. And they aren't the only ones to find excuses for Mrs. Mandela. All the evidence indicates that the police and the government have been pursuing a decidedly less than vigorous investigation. This apparently perverse decision reflects the importance the government attaches to Mr. Mandela, seeing him as the key black politician with whom it must do business during the transition period of negotiation. If Mr. Mandela were to remove himself from the political stage on account of his wife, the risks attending this volatile era of political transformation would be incalculable.

But a dangerous precedent is being set. The ANC's secretary general, Alfred Nzo, recently blamed Mrs. Mandela's problems on smears by the media. Its willingness to turn a blind eye to her misdeeds raises troubling questions about the potential for nepotism, press restrictions, and unequal justice in the fragile democracy of the new South Africa.

JOHN CARLIN is the South Africa correspondent for *The Independent* of London.

King Hussein, our buddy.

DESERT RAT

By Michael Kelly

AMMAN, JORDAN

Have you ever danced with the devil in the pale moonlight? Probably not. It's a tough step to master, tougher than the lambada even, and heaven help you if you step on your partner's hoof. If you want to see it done, though—and done right, done by someone who can really trip the black light fantastic, a real Astaire of the sulfuric zones—here and now is where the box seats are going cheap for the performance of a lifetime.

His Majesty King Hussein has ruled the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for thirty-eight years, and there may be no one in the world who knows the old fandango better. He has dipped and twirled with Nasser and Arafat and Assad and Qaddafi, with Nixon and Brezhnev and Kissinger—with many, many dark and cunning lords. Quite a few of his partners thought little of him (perhaps because he is a little man, perhaps because he is polite and pleasant and sometimes seems indecisive), and many expressed their disdain by double-crossing him at one time or another. A surprising number went so far as to try to bump the small king off. But most of the old partners are gone, and Hussein of Jordan is still perched, handsomely if somewhat gingerly, on the throne. What's going on now is a study in why, and why it may not last.

Before the Gulf war began, a lot of Amman's deep thinkers said that the conflict would probably widen the gap between the perpetually angry, increasingly fundamentalist Palestinians who make up almost half the population (70 percent in Amman) and the Westernized Jordanian elite who still control the military and most of the political hierarchy. Mayhem was predicted, and anti-American riots, and possibly a serious challenge to Hussein's regime. Two weeks into the war, however, nothing of the sort had occurred. The streets were quiet, and Hussein, by all signs and accounts, had never been more popular.

The reasons why have a lot to do with the king's skilled footwork, and they could be seen on a Friday nine days after the bombing began, in Amman's Baqa'a refugee camp, where some 80,000 Palestinians live in a teeming, wretched mass. Two weeks earlier, Friday prayers in Baqa'a had ended with a demonstration that was nearly a riot; Western journalists were roughed up, stones were thrown, etc. This Friday the protest attracted at most 2,000 people in a brief, orderly, and rather desultory march. Although there was plenty of

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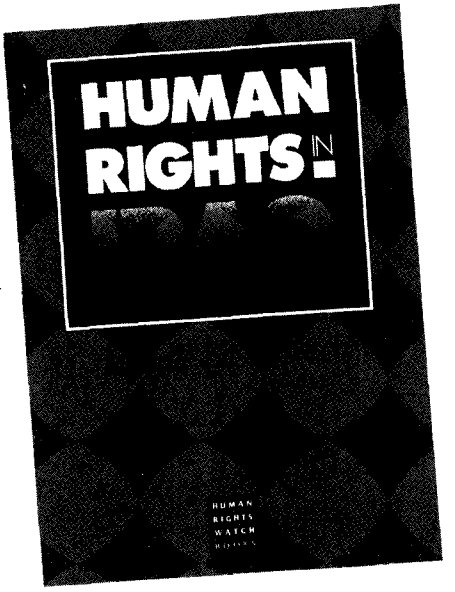

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the usual death-to-America rhetoric, nobody seemed inclined to do violence to anyone. And certainly not to Hussein. Shop windows and walls were papered with posters of the smiling king next to the beaming Saddam, in glossy color against a backdrop of Jerusalem.

Young Ibrahim Khrais took a moment off from a bit of hopeful chanting—"Today, Scuds in Tel Aviv. Tomorrow, Scuds in the White House"—to explain the way things were. "We are all with Saddam. . . . The king, I think, is actually with Saddam too. But he cannot do anything more about it than he does, because Israel is right next door. The people understand this, so they are not angry with the king." Mohammed Ananiti, a second-generation refugee, was more skeptical, but no less forgiving. "We are totally with Saddam; the king is near Saddam but not with him," he said.

Six months since Iraq attacked Kuwait, two weeks since America attacked Iraq, and His Majesty is still such a dervish even his own people can't quite make out his outline. He was against the taking of Kuwait, but not for the American-led war to take it back. He remains, sort of, a friend of the America that has sustained and armed him all these years. But he turns a benign eye on the bloody anti-American rhetoric that fills the streets of Amman and the parliament of the Hashemite kingdom. Officially, he is aligned neither with Saddam Hussein nor against him. Really, as the people in Baqa'a correctly sense, he is on Saddam's side, but not so blatantly as to force a showdown with Israel or the United States. (A good example is his wink-and-a-nod approach to the economic sanctions on Iraq. A few days after the bombing began, the officially embargoed oil trucks from Iraq were still crossing the border into Jordan in an unbroken convoy, and the Baghdad stores were still filled with processed foods from Amman.)

Hussein limits his own statements to carefully modulated pitches for peace, leaving the masses' thirst for more bloodthirsty rhetoric to be slaked by the Islamic fundamentalists who have won control of the lower house of parliament, by the protesters, and by the popular press. All do the job with adolescent gusto. "The Arab peoples, who are already pregnant with hatred of the United States, will deliver painful strokes to American interests all over the world," writes Dr. A. R. Malhas in *The Jordan Times*. "Protective chest vests may become standard American underwear!"

In all cases, the freedom to speak out was given by Hussein, in a democratization process he and his brother Crown Prince Hassan began in 1989. That process is largely aimed at defusing the extremists by giving them platforms from which to shout and an increasing degree of real power. After a fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood candidate won the speakership of the lower house in the last elections, Hussein reshuffled his Cabinet, giving five seats to Muslim Brotherhood men and two more to independent fundamentalists.

The king's behavior is part of a career pattern directed by the unpleasant realities of Jordan: a poor, weak country of mostly worthless rocky desert, bordered by large, hungry Arab states; in a state of perpetual tension with Israel; stuck with more than a million Palestinians for whom refugee status has become permanent; and dependent on U.S. aid and Arab trade for economic survival. The essential point in governing this mess has always been placating the dangerous and numerous Palestinians, a point Hussein probably grasped at the age of 15, when he watched a Palestinian assassin gun down his grandfather, King Abdullah.

Hussein has always met the Palestinians more than halfway, even at the risk of losing all. In 1967, when the mob howled for war with Israel, Hussein joined Egypt, Syria, and Iraq for the disastrous six-day folly that cost him Jerusalem and the West Bank. When, after 1967, the various groups of the Palestine Liberation Organization decided to make Jordan their base for attacks on Israel, Hussein allowed the *fedayeen* to stay until they had grown to a well-armed force of more than 50,000, had reduced the country to near anarchy, had made clear their intentions of taking over completely, and had tried to kill him. Worked then, works now.

But appeasement may not keep the streets quiet indefinitely. For the moment the mob that has accepted Hussein's "near Saddam but not with Saddam" position is happy, because (*a*) an Arab nation has stood up to the Great Satan for a whole two weeks and is still on its feet, and (*b*) Israelis are suffering. Both offer immense psychic gratification. (A fair indication of the way Jordanians feel about Jews can be found in the lobby of the Intercontinental Hotel, which boasts the only hotel shop I have ever seen that stocks, along with the Harold Robbinses and Jeffrey Archers, such works as *The International Jew: The World's Foremost Problem.*)

Before too long, however, the war will be over. Saddam Hussein will be defeated and Jordanians will no longer wake to the pleasure of front-page pictures of dead and wounded in Tel Aviv. When that happens, Hussein will be left with a great deal of debris. In 1989 the per capita income of Jordanians was cut in half; since the Gulf crisis began in August, the complete destruction of the country's tourist trade, the crippling of trade between Iraq and Jordan, and the cutoff of trade between Saudi Arabia and Jordan have left Hussein's kingdom close to economic collapse.

Meanwhile, the fundamentalists will have solidified their power, and they will not be pleased with the notion of going back to a *status quo ante* relationship with Israel. "The threat is from the fundamentalists," said George S. Hawatmeh, *The Jordan Times*'s editor in chief. "These guys came with an agenda. They want to wipe Israel out. . . . What will suffer in the coming months will be the position of the moderates."

Moreover, even moderate Jordanians such as Hawatmeh who believe Israel has a right to exist will demand what they like to call "the new Arab order," a vague notion that covers a transfer of wealth from the richer Arab states to the poorer ones, and the establishment

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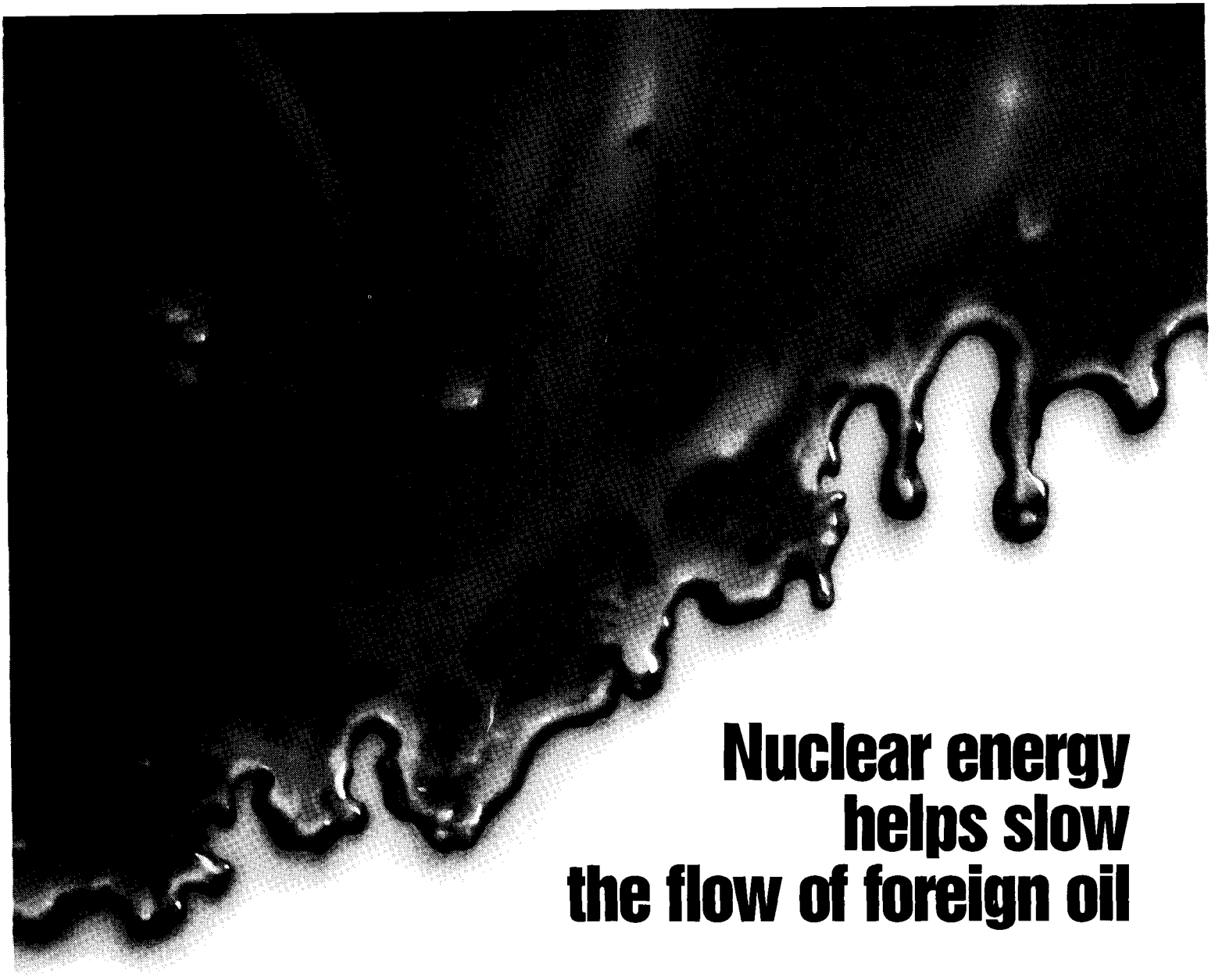

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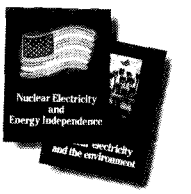

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of some sort of Palestinian entity in the West Bank. "We cannot go back. Hussein knows this," said Hawatmeh. "War or peace, things cannot go back to what they were; the people will not tolerate that."

But Saudi Arabia isn't about to allow U.S. troops to die for the privilege of giving up any part of its petrobucks to Jordan. And Israel hasn't restrained itself in the face of Scud attacks for the privilege of giving up territory it has held for twenty-three years. Attitudes had been stiffening on all sides before the war began. There is no reason to think that thousands, or tens of thousands, of deaths will mollify them. The war is likely to end with a hardening of the old order, not the birth of a new one. And then we will see how nimble Hussein can really be.

MICHAEL KELLY is a free-lance writer.

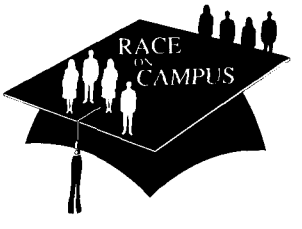
A Campus Report: Wisconsin

ONLY CORRECT

By Ken Emerson

MADISON, WISCONSIN

In the fall of 1988 the University of Wisconsin-Madison chapter of Zeta Beta Tau held an off-campus fund-raising "slave auction" at which pledging students performed a couple of skits in blackface and Afro wigs, and afterward the audience made bids for the performers' services. Many students as well as faculty were indignant, especially since the campus had already suffered a series of race-related fracases. (Ironically, ZBT, which is predominantly Jewish, had been on the receiving end of one of these when some members of a goyish Greek society crashed a ZBT party and threw some ethnic slurs as well as punches.) After a student disciplinary committee ruled the skits were constitutionally protected free speech, protesters occupied the administration building and demanded that Chancellor Donna Shalala do something. Insisting that bad taste was protected by the First Amendment, she nonetheless initiated a revised code of student conduct.



Modified and expanded to cover all twenty-six of the University of Wisconsin's campuses, the new code (called U.W.S. 17), which became effective at the beginning of the last academic year, states that students may be disciplined for "racist or discriminatory comments, epithets, or other expressive behavior directed at an individual or on separate occasions at different individuals" if these "intentionally demean the race, sex, religion, color, creed, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, or age of the individual or individuals; and create an intimidating, hostile, or demeaning environment for education, university-related work, or other university-authorized activity."

U.W.S. 17 is one of nearly 125 codes recently imposed by colleges to prohibit what's become widely known as "hate speech." Critics, protesting that these constitute gag rules on free speech, come from every ideological persuasion. Ed Meese and Nat Hentoff, *Commentary* and *The Progressive* (which is published in Madison), otherwise strange bedfellows, are all opposed. So is the head of the gay and lesbian organization at the University of Wisconsin's Milwaukee campus. The leaders of Milwaukee's Black Student Union dismiss the code as a "joke." And these are the very people U.W.S. 17 is intended to protect. The Wisconsin chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union has filed suit, citing as plaintiffs students (and an instructor) whose very names—Abdalla, Bloomingdale, Farnsworth, Flynn—suggest a melting pot of internal dissent and include the editors of the left-wing student newspaper on the Milwaukee campus.

So far these campus codes have quickly crumbled in the courts. The week before U.W.S. 17 took effect, Federal District Court Judge Avern Cohn threw out such a rule at the University of Michigan. A few months later the University of Connecticut's regulations were severely curtailed in a court-approved settlement of a suit brought by an Asian American student who had been kicked out of her dormitory for displaying on her door a homemade poster declaring that "bimbos," "preppies," "racists," and, allegedly, "homos" should be "shot on sight." (Two women, objecting to "bimbos," lodged the original complaint.)

Some other schools have backed down of their own accord. Trinity College in Hartford has modified its racial harassment policy to protect freedom of speech and now stresses mediation rather than punishment. Tufts University rescinded its code, which prohibited "demeaning" speech in specific areas, after students made a mockery of it by outlining in chalk various "free-speech zones."

The Wisconsin statute and a similar one adopted last spring by Stanford are carefully worded to withstand a court challenge. Because only speech directed at an individual is actionable, these codes ostensibly curtail the free exchange of insults but not of ideas. It's OK to opine that homosexuals, for instance, are vile perverts, but punishable to single one out and say, "You vile pervert!" These codes are informed by the constitutional argument that hate speech, especially when it occurs at a public, taxpayer-supported institution, infringes on its victims' Fourteenth Amendment right to equal protection and, by extension, to equal

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educational opportunity. This argument, advanced by Mari Matsuda, Richard Delgado, and a few other law professors, is decidedly a minority (in both senses of the word) opinion, but it requires a more thoughtful refutation than simply waving the flag of the First Amendment as if the Bill of Rights contained no others.

The problem with U.W.S. 17 and codes like it is not simply that they infringe on the First Amendment. They also don't work—and, in those few instances where they apply, they're unnecessary. U.W.S. 17, for instance, could not have been invoked retroactively to punish the ZBT thespians. Their performance affronted black students generally, but it was not aimed at an individual. Nor could the rule be used against the perpetrators, if they are ever caught, of the anti-Semitic vandalism that swept Madison last summer and fall. (These incidents included the spray-painting of Nazi graffiti on the frat-house roof of hapless ZBT.) Vandalism is against the law, but so long as it is not directed against an individual, such obnoxious "expressive behavior" is not against U.W.S. 17. (Nor would it seem to violate Stanford's revised Fundamental Standard.) In short, the rule doesn't cover the very incidents that inspired it.

But that doesn't mean the code hasn't been invoked. Last April James E. Sulton Jr., the University of Wisconsin system's special assistant for minority affairs, claimed that U.W.S. 17 had yet to be enforced as its first academic year in operation drew toward a close. Although this was widely believed to be the case, it was not true. The ACLU's attorneys were surprised to learn, in response to their discovery requests, that four students had been placed on probation for violating the rule and a fifth had been suspended—all on different campuses.

None of these luckless students, however, would seem to deserve canonization as a martyr to free speech. The disciplinary records indicate that drunkenness, uninvited entry into a student's room, physical assault or the threat of assault—one or more of the above—also figured in all the infractions. Thus each could probably have been punished, by a dean or in some instances a district attorney, without recourse to U.W.S. 17.

Professors at the University of Wisconsin Law School who vetted U.W.S. 17 describe it as "cosmetic" and "symbolic." University administrators defend it as a welcome mat to minority students and their parents, and as a warning to others that racism, sexism, and all those other isms will not be tolerated on campus. But even good symbols can make bad rules. A university president's bully pulpit can be more effective than bullying, bureaucratic restrictions. It's hard to imagine how students will ever learn to think freely without speaking freely.

KEN EMERSON is "Viewpoints" editor of *New York Newsday*.

A Campus Report: Yale

HATE MAIL

By Jeff Rosen

NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

"Now do you know why we call you NIGGERS?" read an anonymous letter sent to ten black students at Yale Law School last fall. Claiming to be classmates of a law student who was raped off campus by two black men, the authors of the letter signed themselves "Yale Students for Racism." Organized bigotry is hardly popular at a university like Yale, and most students expected the racist letters to unite the campus in appalled condemnation. Instead, the frenzied reaction to the letters has divided the campus bitterly, demonstrating how difficult it has become for Yale students to distinguish between imagined racism and the real thing.

The first divisions appeared as students and faculty hastened to express their sympathy with the victims. One black law student wrote a poem and posted it in the corridor of the law school. Several days later she reported that the words "You Suck" had been scrawled on her door. This contemptuous reaction to the poem, said some students, clearly reflected the racism rampant at the law school. An anguished debate followed, until someone pointed out that the words "You Suck" had been scrawled indiscriminately on the doors of white and black students throughout the dormitory.

The tensions grew when an ad hoc group of Yale graduate students calling themselves the Committee for Diversity demanded a day-long boycott of law school classes to protest the racist letters. Why, some students and faculty wondered, were law school classes an appropriate target of protest, especially after Dean Guido Calabresi had condemned the letters as "the stuff of Hitler" and suggested that students could better express their determination to fight racism by giving up something that really mattered to them, like a weekend?

After another impassioned debate, the Committee for Diversity decided that the purpose of the strike was to allow students to attend race-sensitivity training workshops. To lead the workshops, the committee members contacted Project Reach, a New York-based youth counseling center, whose "traveling anti-racism project" has sent "racial consultants" to such cam-

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puses as Brown, Wesleyan, and Carlton. Despite his misgivings about the boycott, Calabresi pledged $5,000 to bring Project Reach to New Haven. ("I told the organizers that they should negotiate for whatever they could get," Donald T. Kao, director of Project Reach, told me after the strike. "If the administration is paying, we always ask for more. If it's the students, we'll go for as little as $100.")

On the day of the strike, after an energetic picket on the law school steps, nearly 300 students, most of them white, gathered in the auditorium at 10 a.m. for the first workshop. The seven Project Reach consultants introduced themselves by ethnic group, and Kao explained the ground rules. First, "We need to look at terminology as part of self-determination." (Terms like "kids" and "old people" were forbidden for the day.) Second, "We can't look at racism without also looking at sexism, homophobia, and class issues." Then a warm-up exercise: "How many racists do we have in this room?" asked Kao, and most hands went up.

"Since racism is learned in segregation," Kao continued, "the only way to unlearn racism is with segregation." Then whites were asked to stay in the auditorium, and people of color moved to a smaller room. For the next hour the people of color imagined themselves as whites at Yale, and the whites imagined themselves as people of color. Both groups then reconvened to compare the lists of their feelings. The list of the whites included: "Torn between two worlds," "Excluded from the dominant model," "I feel alone and precarious." Some black students attacked the phrases scornfully as "abstract platitudes." The people of color, imagining themselves white, had been much more direct: "I am networking with people," "I know how you feel," "ignorant," "sheltered," "guilty."

One black student explained the anger in the list by noting that being apart from whites was "the first time I've felt empowered at Yale." But as the gap between the two lists became clear, the white students at first seemed hurt ("white people need encouragement, too"), then defensive ("I'd give my left ball to end racism and my right one to end sexism"), then angry themselves, especially when Kao appeared to suggest that everyone who had chosen to attend classes rather than the workshops was a racist. "I think we're not ready for coalition building," said Kao, flustered, and the afternoon workshop was postponed to give everyone a chance to cool down.

When a much smaller group convened for the final workshop around 4 p.m., tempers flared again. During the break a black student had announced that "racism doesn't include black people." This upset the Jewish students, who recalled that several of the student organizers of the Committee for Diversity had invited Abdul Alim Muhammad, the anti-Semitic national spokesman for Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam, to speak at Yale Law School last spring. "Part of Afrocentric thought," explained a black student at the workshop, "tends to construe racism as power. Black people are not exercising power, so by this definition, they cannot be racist." "In that case," a white student retorted, "I'm not against racism," and the day ended with semantic squabbles and an a cappella singing group brought in for the occasion.

Five days later, armed with the lessons of the sensitivity workshops, some black Yale College students decided to organize another protest against racism. "Boycott Naples! Don't Buy Racist Pizza!" declared the poster they distributed around campus. A black freshman, they said, had been thrown out of Yale's most popular pizzeria because she was falsely accused of being drunk. Claiming that Naples employees had used racial slurs and profanity, they called on Yale to boycott Naples until the pizzeria apologized and the employees were fired.

For two days 200 students picketed Naples, chanting—without apparent irony—"Do the right thing." But a week later Richard Cho, an Asian American freshman, wrote in a campus paper that the pizzeria had been wrongly accused: the freshman, he reported, had been drunk to the point of vomiting, and the racial slur had been misunderstood. The poster accused the pizzeria owner of saying, "Yellow people wouldn't have done that"; in fact, he had said, in a thick Sicilian accent, "Yale people wouldn't have done that." The Black Students Association abruptly called off the protests, without explanation or apology. And a university investigation later found that the black students had yelled racial slurs at the police, not that the police had harassed the students, as the poster claimed.

At the law school, meanwhile, students and faculty were debating whether the authors of the racist letters should be expelled once they were identified. Dean Calabresi framed the debate by suggesting that speech by anonymous hate groups was not protected by law school rules. "For myself," he wrote, "I am convinced that there is no place in this school for such vicious cowards." Nearly 300 law students signed a petition to the same effect. And the executive committee of the law school alumni association decided unanimously that anonymous speech does not contribute to "civil discourse," without explaining why not, or why civil discourse is more important than free expression.

Only ten law students initially expressed "reservations" about the clamor to expel the racists. The Supreme Court, they noted, has held repeatedly that the First Amendment *does* protect anonymous speech. And law school rules unambiguously guarantee the First Amendment rights of all students. Calabresi replied that he makes an exception for anonymous speech because of his belief that "lawyers shouldn't be cowards." Finally, Yale President Benno C. Schmidt Jr. reasserted his credentials as a champion of the First Amendment. "Free speech protects cowards, too," said Schmidt, noting that "the most radical, non-conforming speech has been

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anonymous." But law students who expressed the same view were angrily condemned as "legalistic," or worse.

As the new semester begins, the university's efforts to identify the fingerprints on the racist letters have turned up no leads, despite the cooperation of the FBI. Some of the protests, for their part, helped to document examples of genuine racism that black students encounter on the violent streets of New Haven. But the indiscriminate charges of racism that emerged from the sensitivity workshops and the pizzeria boycott show how difficult it has become for Yale students to talk clearly about race. That's all the more reason for Yale Law School, of all places, not to carve new exceptions out of the First Amendment, which would make racists even harder to know.

JEFF ROSEN, a former TNR reporter-researcher, is a law student at Yale.

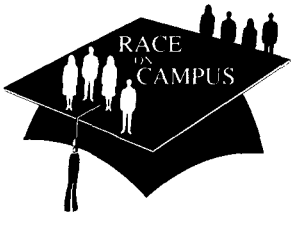
A Campus Report: Oberlin

THIN SKINS

By Jacob Weisberg

OBERLIN, OHIO

Oberlin's student groups undergo a perpetual process akin to what biologists call mitosis. They keep dividing themselves into separate units. Amid charges of racism and sexism, the Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Union recently splintered into four narrow factions: Gay Men of Color, Zani (lesbians of color), Lesbians Be Loud (white lesbians), and the Gay Men's Rap Group (gay white men). A similar thing happened to the Asian-American Alliance. East Asians decided that the umbrella organization was too dominated by American-born South Asians and founded their own splinter association. Korean and Muslim students did the same thing. Jewish students are split between Hillel and a smaller, radical sect, one of whose members wrote an essay in the student newspaper this fall titled "Hillel, fuck your Jewish Community." Amid a welter of other charges, Michael Hutchens, a senior, asserted that Hillel had no place for him as a Jewish bisexual.



An ill-mannered, tribal politics based on ever narrower conceptions of collective identity seems to have replaced every other kind of politics at Oberlin. Though students overwhelmingly oppose the Gulf war, the college's peace efforts have been undermined by the same balkanization that brought down its student government and the elected board of its student cooperative association. "My reason for not wanting a war is different from somebody with middle-class privilege," one of the leaders of Abusua, the principal black student group, told me. So far blacks have not joined the opposition. Some Jewish students have become involved, but many are upset at the anti-Zionist tenor of the movement. And because of a recognized need for consensus-based "feminist process," organizational meetings have organized next to nothing. Marc Blecher, a government professor, calls Oberlin's political culture "a marriage of '60s radicalism and '80s narcissism—a toxic combination."

Increasingly Oberlin students think, act, study, and live apart. The college's residential and social life are dominated by co-ops, and what are called "program houses." Originally intended as residences for upperclass majors in some departments, they have evolved as if dictated by a voluntary equivalent of South Africa's Group Areas Act. About a third of Asians live in Asia House, many Jews sleep and eat in "J" House, Latinos in Spanish House, blacks in the African-Heritage House, foreign students in Third World House next door. Many freshmen pass directly into these ghettos without ever living in an integrated dormitory; many of them go on to major in the corresponding academic programs: Judaic and Near Eastern Studies, Women's Studies, Black Studies, Latin American Studies, and East Asian Studies. The result is separate worlds. "I have no black friends," one Jewish senior told me. "My entire social circle is Jewish and WASP. That was never true before."

To see how obsessed the campus is, one only has to pick up an issue of *The Oberlin Review.* The news, letters, and editorial columns of every issue are full of accusations of racism, sexism, heterosexism, homophobia, "ableism," and a host of other insensitivities abhorrent to the disciples of what might be called Oberlinism. The student finance committee is racist for not having enough blacks; a Puerto Rican play is homophobic; the reviewer of the play is racist against Latinos; ads for a disco belittle Christians; Pete Seeger objectifies women; a postage stamp commemorating *Gone with the Wind* represents "obscene nostalgia for the old slave south and KKK terror."

Oberlin has a long liberal pedigree. The college, which first enrolled blacks in 1835, was a stop on the underground railroad. Today it brags of its achievements in recruiting and retaining minority students and faculty. With the exception of the odd bit of bathroom graffiti, there is little of what anyone outside of a college campus would call racism. But in a perverse equation, perceived racism at Oberlin is inversely proportional to actual racism: the less students see, the harder they look. For this reason, real racism seems to come as something of a relief. "I believe that overt racism is to some extent a good thing," Abusua leader Gregory Hampton told me. "Once we deal with that, we can get together and

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change things." In 1988, after the appearance on campus of an anonymous "White Supremacy Rules" banner, classes were canceled for the day, and 1,000 people marched. One professor told me it was the only unifying event he could remember.

Oberlin students are exquisitely sensitive to the subtlest forms of bias—embedded in language, glances, gestures, and, of course, in institutions. Black students say white professors treat them like children, and that their white classmates patronize them. "Racism is a confusing word to many students," said Hampton. "It's not a color thing, it's about a mentality." It is important to recognize how scholastic and self-serving the definition of racism that holds sway at Oberlin is: "people of color" cannot be racist because they lack power. Because they do have power, whites are intrinsically racist. Most whites I spoke to accepted this definition. At a brown rice and beans dinner to discuss the college's policy on hate crimes, I asked a group of white students whether they were racists. All acknowledged that they were, because of their "white skin privilege." One said that those of his peers who couldn't admit their racism were "in denial."

Last spring two black women were asked to leave an outdoor table at a local bakery because they were eating food bought at a rival restaurant. They initiated a boycott, vowing to make life hell for the racist establishment. "The ignorance, the audacity, the arrogance, and the racist attitude to do such a thing is what is horrifying to us," one said in the letter to the *Review*. "We have got to realize that it is not just the administration and all of the other top brass practicing bigotry. It's the everyday person perpetuating it." The store's owner apologized to the women, but the protest continued. "We'll stand out here every day until a public apology is made to Oberlin's entire black community," said Carolyn Cunningham, a junior at the time.

The same issue of the paper included an essay titled "Racist women deny right to lower blinds," by an Asian student who had an altercation with two librarians in the art museum. "These two white women blatantly and unnecessarily attempted to deny an Asian student access to a hallway inside the art building, refused her right to lower blinds to enable her vision, defied common courtesy, adult respect, and most of all, silenced her freedom to express herself," wrote Ching Ching Ni.

Black-Jewish relations are especially troubled. The bad blood dates from an appearance on campus by Kwame Toure, the former Stokely Carmichael, who gave a speech in which he called Zionists racists and pigs. This led to an outpouring of rage and hurt on all sides. Despite some fence-mending since, the ill-will persists, and both blacks and Jews express a fear that the incident could repeat itself. It seems likely, given a steady stream of provocation. Several Jewish students told me about Adrienne Jones, a Black Studies professor, who teaches that Jews only help blacks because of a fear that as potential victims, "they would be next." The most recent issue of *The Collective*, the magazine of "people of color," features an interview with Dhoruba Bin Wahad, a former Black Panther, who says American Jews are socialized into racism. "The first group they learned to be better than was Negroes. The first word they learned was nigger."

Jewish students are divided into two groups: those who feel that they too deserve victim status—and that black anti-Semitism is part of their oppression—and those who buy into the notion of themselves as white oppressors. The latter publishes a Jewish magazine, *Tiferet* (a term borrowed from Jewish mysticism, which means "grandeur" in Hebrew). The most recent issue includes, with approving commentary, more rantings from Bin Wahad, who says that if Hitler hadn't happened to have an anti-Semitic program, "it's very easy for me to imagine Jews singing Deutschland Uber Alles and fighting in behalf of European racist domination of people of color."

The college administration has played an auxiliary role in heightening racial sensitivities. While on campus, I participated in an anti-racism seminar required for the fifty or so upperclassmen who serve as counselors in dorms. The session, called "Fighting Oppression and Celebrating Diversity," was sponsored by the dean's office and led by Bill Shipton, a dean of diversity education at Indiana University. Through films, discussion, and role-playing games, Shipton reiterated the litany I heard constantly while I was at Oberlin: all whites are racist, and only they can be racist. Shipton instructs participants to "unlearn" racism not through efforts at colorblindness, but through heightened consciousness of race. To admit one's racism is a sign of strength and growth; according to Shipton's "onion theory," whites must continue to strip off layers of inherited racism through their whole lives.

Throughout the three-and-a-half-hour session, no participant raised an objection, yet I subsequently heard that many were dismayed. Why had they not spoken out? "It's not worth it," one senior told me. "You just get attacked." The truth is that all Oberlin students are not brainwashed. The most popular magazine on campus is *Below the Belt*, which pokes fun at the politically correct reflex. But the magazine is published anonymously, without bylines or a staff box. Most of those who aren't brainwashed are well cowed. With rare exceptions, the faculty hasn't been much braver.

"I think the tendency to find ever more rarefied units of racism might have peaked a year or two ago," President S. Frederick Starr told me. That might be the case, but I didn't find much evidence of it in three days at Oberlin. It's true that the faculty hasn't yet passed a proposal for a diversity course requirement sponsored by the faculty Minority Concerns Subcommittee—but that's because it votes by secret ballot. Few want to go

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on record as opponents of the multicultural agenda. Dogmatism and hypersensitivity have made Oberlin such an unpleasant place that it's hard to imagine things not taking a turn for the better before long. But before the situation at Oberlin can improve, the silent majority of students and faculty who are true liberals will have to reassert themselves, and not worry too much about the names they get called. ●

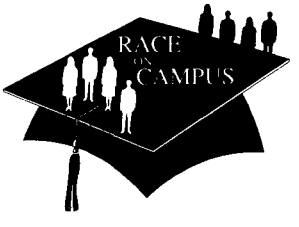
A Campus Report: Berkeley

GET BACK

By Stephen R. Barnett

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

Though "diversity" in faculty hiring looms large on most campuses today, the University of California, Berkeley, has, typically, taken the concept a step beyond the norm. Not content with "numerical diversiversity," Berkeley has announced a new goal of "true diversity." True diversity means matching professors' ethnic or gender identities with the fields in which they work: black teachers in African American history, Chicano faculty in Chicano literature, and, presumably, female professors in "women's" subjects.



The goal emerges in a recent report of the Berkeley faculty's Budget Committee, which handles all academic appointments and promotions for the campus:

> The appointment of a Hispanic to a position in Chemistry, a discipline that is relatively "acultural," has a considerably different programmatic impact than the appointment of a Hispanic to the English department, where that individual's origins may bear directly on his or her chosen field. The latter appointment would in turn have a different impact than the appointment of such an individual to the Chicano Studies program in the Department of Ethnic Studies. While all of these appointments would contribute to the achievement of numerical diversity on the Campus, the programmatic importance of each to the larger goal of true diversity will be different.

This thinking points toward a segregation of both scholars and academic fields. Professors will be typecast by their ethnic identities—with Chicanos in the English department expected to do Chicano literature, not Shakespeare—while fields will be ghettoized as well, with African American history taught only by blacks. True diversity may further demand that the scholar's race or sex be brought to bear *correctly* on the subject. A black scholar writing about race in America who stresses interracial commonalities will be making less use of her "origins," and so will contribute less to true diversity than one who stresses racial differences.

The true diversity concept already is keenly felt by graduate students and faculty at Berkeley and nearby campuses. In talking with doctoral students in Berkeley's English and history departments, I learned that nearly all the minority students there are specializing in their "own" ethnic topics. These students uniformly told me that their interest in the field was deeply rooted and not the result of the ample jobs now available or of feelings of obligation. But many had agonized over the decision, and several voiced resentment at the "type-casting" perception—that "people will think we're being pushed into the subject because of our race," as an Asian American put it. Two students had initially chosen other topics precisely to avoid being "pigeonholed," but had switched after realizing their true interest. One black student who is defying the prevailing assumption complained that among faculty and even more strongly among students, "There is an expectation that if you're black, you're interested in African American [topics], and if not, something is wrong."

Margo Hendricks, a black assistant professor of English at the University of California, Santa Cruz, specializes in Renaissance literature. She is continually being asked, "How did you end up in Renaissance studies?" On one occasion, Hendricks says, "a white student bluntly demanded to know why I wasn't specializing in African American literature." At a conference another Renaissance scholar introduced himself and asked her opinion of Henry Louis Gates Jr.'s work on black American discourse; when she disclaimed an opinion because it had nothing to do with Renaissance literature, he asked her about *Othello.*

Hendricks, who formerly taught at San Jose State University, told me of one black student there who wanted to do medieval literature but "felt obligated to do African American"; of another who was upbraided by fellow blacks for not doing African American and "had a tough time dealing with the guilt"; and of a Latina student who was doing African American but felt pressure to do Latin American writers instead.

Segregation of fields is also a source of tension. Minority literature (or "cultural studies") is now the hottest topic in Berkeley's English department, and there are plenty of white students working on it. In history too there are white students specializing, or wanting to specialize, in ethnic topics. Although the students reported unstinting encouragement in these interests by Berkeley faculty members (both white and minority), they feel up against the job market and its assumption that, as one student put it, "African American history is done by African Americans." One student said she had been advised by faculty not to write her dissertation about race, since "those jobs

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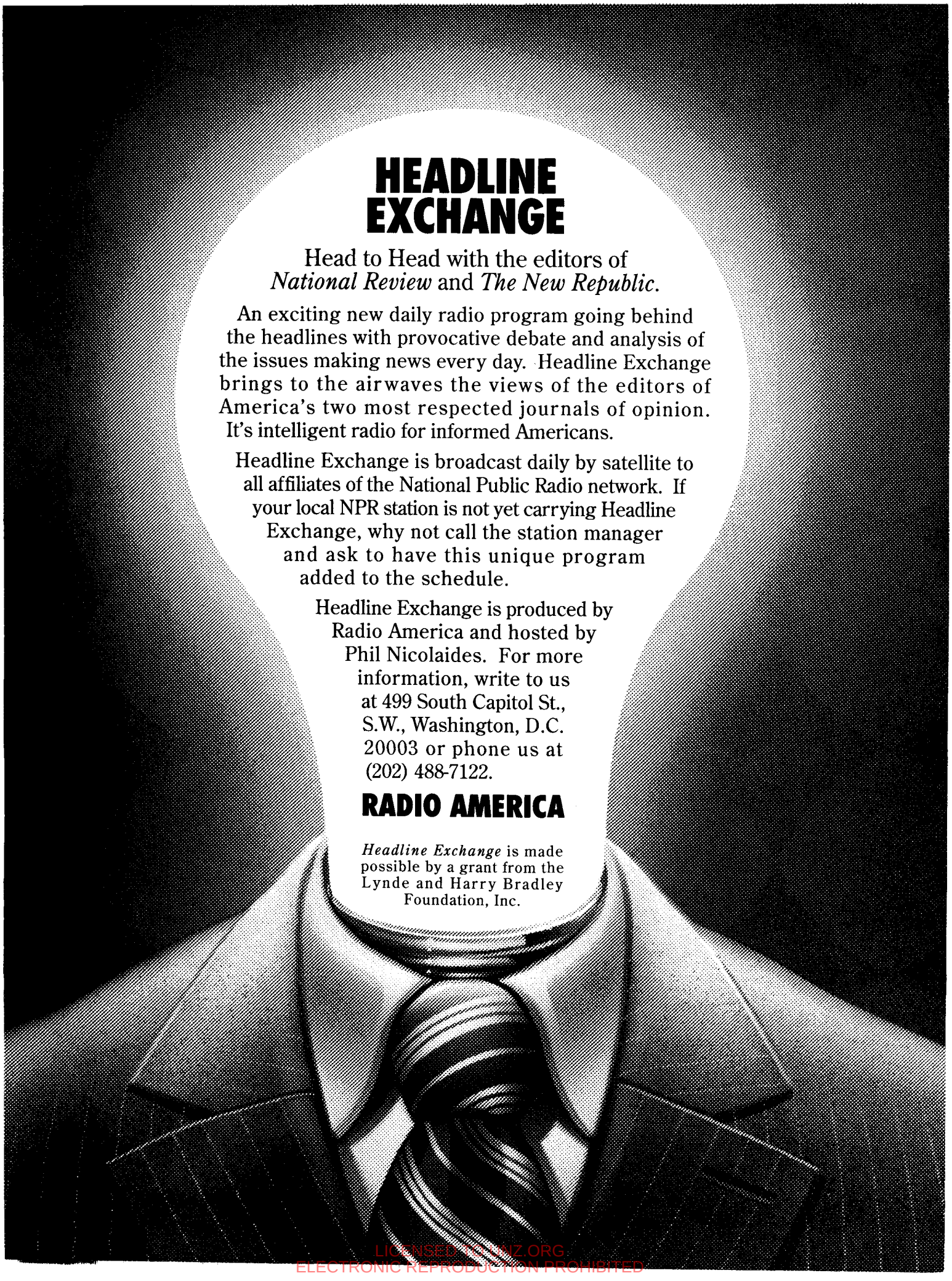
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are likely to go to non-whites."

Almost all of these students are wrestling with how to present themselves in the job market as something other than ethnic specialists. As one history professor explained, "You can do African American history but not call yourself an African Americanist. If you write about urban blacks, you call yourself an urban historian; if you do rural blacks in the South, you are a Southern historian."

Jobs aside, many white students feel "warned off" ethnic fields by their minority peers. As an English professor put it, "The right to speak on these subjects is contested." White graduate students feel particular hostility when teaching undergraduate courses. According to one, black undergraduates "tend to feel that whites can't teach black history because they lack the experience of racial oppression." A letter that appeared recently in Berkeley's student newspaper, written by a Chicana student, confirmed this: "I want Mexican professors to teach me Mexican history. I want Afro-American professors to teach me Afro-American history. How could a white man place himself in the shoes of a Mexican . . . ? How could they have the audacity to teach us what happened to our people?" One white student specializing in minority history found these beliefs especially distressing: "The whole idea of history involves putting yourself in the shoes of someone else. How else can I write about people who lived in the sixteenth century?"

Hendricks calls the territorial attitudes she observes among some minority students "a form of apartheid," a new version of "the racist notion that blacks think differently from whites." Waldo E. Martin Jr., a black professor at Berkeley specializing in African American history, likewise strongly opposes "the notion that only a black can do black history." Berkeley's history department boasts two distinguished white scholars on African American history, Leon Litwack and Lawrence Levine. One of their white colleagues laments that "a Litwack or Levine couldn't happen now," so that "we lose the fresh insights that a really talented historian can bring to understanding another culture." Litwack agrees that it "probably would be difficult" for him to get started today.

True diversity, as embraced by Berkeley's Budget Committee, has been limited so far to matching a professor's academic speciality with his or her ethnicity (and perhaps her gender). But students at Berkeley's Boalt Hall Law School have suggested the possibilities for expansion. Their "Coalition for a Diversified Faculty" currently "demands" that the law school: "Hire and tenure five professors using the following criteria: (1) race and ethnicity; (2) gender; (3) sexual orientation; (4) disability; (5) disadvantaged socioeconomic background; and (6) non-traditional scholarship, meaning Critical Legal Studies, critical race theory, ethnic and cultural law studies, and feminist jurisprudence."

"True diversity" does, to some extent, reflect reality. A matching of ethnic identities and academic fields springs naturally from the backgrounds and interests of many minority students. But the expectation that minority scholars will stay in their "own" fields limits them, and territorial attitudes that would segregate fields challenge the basic idea of scholarship as a journey into the unknown, in favor of affirming an ethnic identity already understood. The students and faculty with whom I talked, both minority and white, are troubled by these pressures and trying to resist them. The last thing they need is official doctrine declaring that a Chicano teaching Chicano literature is more valuable than a Chicano teaching chemistry. "When students of color take the course in Shakespeare and see me teaching it, they feel empowered," Hendricks told me. *That*, I would say, is "true diversity."

STEPHEN R. BARNETT is a professor of law at the University of California, Berkeley.

A Campus Report: CCNY

IN THE MIX

By Jim Sleeper

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

In the spring of 1988 New York University sophomore Brian Stettin decided he wasn't a "major talent" in film, his chosen field of study. That summer, during the 1988 presidential campaign, he developed an interest in politics. But NYU, renowned in film, didn't offer political science courses compelling enough to justify paying nearly ten times what it would cost to study at the City College of the City University of New York. So Stettin, Jewish, middle class, from suburban Long Island, transferred to CCNY—38.5 percent black, 28.2 percent Hispanic, 14.5 percent Asian, and 18.5 percent white. Continuing to live in Greenwich Village with NYU friends who thought he'd gone crazy, he began taking the subway up to Harlem.

If some of New York's colleges have reputations for racial conflict, CCNY is in a class of its own. Its African Studies Department chairman, Leonard Jeffries, has characterized whites as "ice people" and racial minorities as "people of the sun"—the latter more compas-

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sionate and communal on account of the life-giving melanin in their skins, he says. CCNY also employs philosophy professor Michael Levin, who believes in blacks' inherent criminality and intellectual inferiority. The school has had more than its share of student demonstrations against "racism," including one last spring protesting an honorary degree for alumnus Colin Powell on the grounds that he serves racist interests.

So what Stettin found among City's 11,075 undergraduates surprised him. "I was struck by the seriousness of the place—by how much more politically aware and how much less frivolous the students were than those I'd known." Survivors of the toughest urban neighborhoods, working their way through a commuter college at great personal sacrifice, many were focused on careers in bio-medicine, law, engineering, and community service. "For many of them, earning a college degree is itself a liberation," Stettin found. "They've been out in the world; they have kids; they have to arrange classes to fit work schedules. It made me, with no obligation except to study, a lot more serious."

Beneficiaries of CUNY's controversial 1969 "open enrollment" policy (which guarantees admission to virtually all high school graduates) and assigned by affirmative-action law to so-called protected groups, many of CCNY's students nevertheless express discomfort with anything, administrative or curricular, that smacks of racial protection. "I've found just the opposite [of racial protectionism]," says Zaida Colon, 47, a Puerto Rican-born mother of three who's a senior in City's Urban Legal Studies program. "Students feel, 'I've been held down long enough by money problems or problems at home.' Now they want to prove themselves. I was brought up to believe you make your own way. True, I didn't have connections; in high school I took the commercial course because the teachers didn't encourage me to go to college. If affirmative action can help make up for that, well, OK. But you have to keep your grades up."

Stettin says he never personally experienced racial hostility at City, even in his spirited arguments with those students who think America limits their chances because they're black. "The activists have a fiercely charged racial pride; they believe this is a racist society and that everything the U.S. does is wrong. But I've never felt threatened."

Stettin's defense of American opportunity finds especially strong confirmation among the one-half of City undergraduates who are immigrants from among eighty countries. Not surprisingly, nationalist passions run deep; arguments about Puerto Rico's future and anti-apartheid strategies fill rooms that once rang with Jewish students' disputes over the socialisms of Stalin, Trotsky, and Schachtman. But most of City's thousands of Latino, Caribbean, Chinese, Pakistani, Indian, Iranian, and Israeli students are desperately seeking relief from ancient feuds. So too are others. "I grew up in South Bronx, which is racially isolated," says Brenda Singleton, a black, 26-year-old education major. "I'd never had a real friendship with anyone not African American. Now my best friends are from Nigeria, Antigua, and Ireland. I'm friends with a girl from Yugoslavia who I'm tutoring in English. It's not polarized at all."

Singleton, who dropped out of high school and earned her GED while working for a foundation and a city agency for six years, speaks appreciatively of the African Studies Department as a place where black students from insular communities can get their feet on the ground. But she's learned that "taking anything that one professor says at face value hurts your education. . . . What [students] learn doesn't end with Jeffries. There are so many other professors who are convincing."

That's the view, too, of Safa Howard, a 31-year-old political science major whose conviction that "the political system is organized on racist principles" might mislead a casual white listener. "The political theory I've studied here transcends race. People are divided by more than that; whites are in trouble, too." Howard declined to join CCNY activists who circulated a petition last year to demand the firing of Levin: "I felt it was the wrong place for people to put their energy. Levin isn't representative of the white faculty here; most are objective and liberal." David Garrow, the biographer of Martin Luther King Jr., who has taught constitutional law at City for six years, says: "It's really a first-rate student body. They're incredibly well-motivated and, among American-born blacks, far less damaged by the New York City public schools than one might expect. For these kids, City is still the personification of upward mobility. There is less ethnic tension and more interracial camaraderie here than anywhere else in New York."

CCNY isn't the only college of the City University whose multiracial strengths have been unfairly eclipsed by instances of racial demagoguery and tension. Baruch College became famous last spring when the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools deferred its reaccreditation, claiming that its campus was "fraught with racial tension" and not committed enough to "the values of social justice and equity critical to serving working people in a multicultural urban environment."

Most students and faculty were stunned—and offended. By Middle States' own admission, Baruch—with the nation's largest business school, the 1990 Nobel Prize-winning Professor Harry Markowitz, an 18 percent minority faculty, and a 16,500-member student body that is 36 percent white, 26 percent black, 20 percent Asian, and 18 percent Hispanic—has a healthier racial mix than most other schools in the association's domain. As at City, students mingle freely in courses and activities; the hustling, articulate

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staff of Baruch's student paper, *The Ticker,* is a miniature U.N.

Baruch's real problem, like City's, is that it's underfunded, hence overcrowded and inadequate in providing student-support services. Most students understand that racism isn't the issue here, but I learned again how easily their views can be eclipsed by racial demagoguery when I visited a public administration class of twenty-five students, only five of them white.

A young man of Puerto Rican background called affirmative action "scary, because you don't know where you stand." "That crosses my mind, too, where I work," admitted a black woman employed by a marketing firm. But then a black student cowed the class into silence with windy rhetoric about blacks' having been "three-fifths of a person since *Plessy* v. *Ferguson.*" I asked whether, looking around the room, he could honestly say that Baruch is "institutionally racist." My question answered itself, he claimed, since "the white students fled to NYU." Having thus dismissed his fellow students and CUNY's historic mission to serve new populations, he concluded with a non sequitur: "We are three-quarters of the world's population, but we have a minority mentality." Three students called me later to say they have no such mentality.

Why, then, did Middle States defer accreditation? Its new director, Howard Simmons, who is black, has inaugurated an all-out push for affirmative action; Middle States' visiting team at Baruch was lobbied furiously by black studies professor Arthur Lewn and education department chairman Donald Smith, who believes that university scholars are "pseudo-scientists" who foist justifications for white domination upon unsuspecting students. We will soon learn whether Middle States overreached; the U.S. Department of Education has deferred its recognition of the association until Simmons can come up with a clear rationale for the criteria imposed on Baruch.

Both Simmons and the department ought to talk to Zaida Colon, Safa Howard, Brenda Singleton, and Rafael Olmeda, news editor of Baruch's *Ticker,* who said this when I asked whether he had ever experienced racial discrimination in college: "Well, once, but it wasn't at Baruch; in fact, it explains why I'm here and not in the Ivy League. When I was a senior at Bronx Science, I sent for Harvard's admission materials. The package came to my house, and out came this Minority Student Information Request Card for me to send in, and a leaflet saying, 'Here are some of the things minority students experience at Harvard.' And I thought: What is this.... I want to know, what do *students* experience at Harvard? Like, what am I to them? Well, I knew what I was. I was the fulfillment of a quota. And I have no intention of being that."

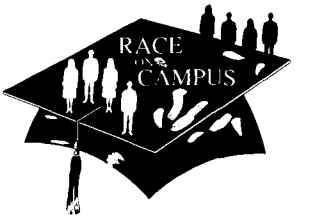
JIM SLEEPER, an editorial writer at *New York Newsday,* is the author of *The Closest of Strangers: Liberalism and the Politics of Race in New York* (W. W. Norton).

Why black students feel torn.

PSYCHED OUT

By Tamar Jacoby

The eighteen undergraduates around the Ivy League seminar table—thirteen blacks, five whites—seemed like a strikingly homogeneous group: ordinary American middle-class kids. Their parents were lawyers, editors, writers, teachers. More than half the blacks had gone to private schools. The topic of the class—the first of thirteen I was teaching on the history of race relations—was their personal experience of "integration."



Born around 1970, well after the civil rights revolution, many of the black students had led thoroughly integrated lives: their schools had been desegregated, their parents worked among whites, several came from mixed marriages. Most had been raised to think that integration was the answer—and that it was entirely plausible in America today. Yet virtually all said they were moving away from this view. They dismissed the desegregation of their childhoods as merely skin-deep. They remembered that their honors classes had been overwhelmingly white, that "race still mattered" even at prep school. "I've seen plenty of physical integration," said one youth. "That doesn't guarantee integration of the heart."

Despite the opportunities they faced, most seemed extremely cynical about white society—and, by extension, about their future in the mainstream. They just did not believe, they said, that there was any such thing as "the American dilemma"—the tension, described by sociologist Gunnar Myrdal, between Americans' democratic ideals and their racial practices. "White Americans are just not caught on the horns of any dilemma," said one. "We African Americans believed what you said about your values. We didn't realize that you were just talking." Nor did they put much store by the changes of the past three decades—changes that had in fact made their lives radically different from their parents'. "The jury's still out on the future," said one black male. "Maybe these are just cosmetic changes on the surface of what will always be a racist world."

The whites in the class were sympathetic—no one doubted that the black experience was somewhat different from their own—but also a little skeptical. "How can you, you people sitting here, say that *your* lives have been ruined by racism?" one student asked. Like any peer

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group, these black teens subtly encouraged each other. None of them had doubts about affirmative action; all saw black solidarity as a supreme value. The formulaic nature of their views made me wonder whether their bitterness was partly a posture or an acquired orthodoxy.

Most of the blacks admitted that they had rarely experienced any deliberate or truly hindering prejudice. Several told stories about being stopped by police who thought they looked suspicious, and about being counseled not to bother applying to college. But they seemed largely unruffled by these personal slights. They were far more preoccupied with the problems of the underclass and with what they called "institutional racism." When asked for evidence of this bias, they cited statistical disparities between blacks and whites—including differential crime rates and education scores.

And yet for all the slightly remote quality of their grievances, they clearly believed they were fundamentally different from their white peers, that they would never quite "belong" in white society. They did not seem angry. They didn't identify with militant groups like the Muslims or the Black Panthers. Nor, for all their criticism of "the system," did they seem particularly self-righteous. They were simply demoralized.

None of the ladders that other groups have used to move into the American mainstream seemed to hold any promise for these Ivy Leaguers. They weren't surprised that blacks as a group have had little luck in business: the corporate world, they said, is ruled by networks we can never hope to crack. Nor were they encouraged by the remarkable rise in recent decades of black elected officials: What good does that do, students asked, if these officials can't change the system? (Just weeks after the inauguration of David Dinkins and Douglas Wilder, these teenagers could muster little enthusiasm for either one.) And when asked about their futures—personal and political—they spoke candidly of a sense of malaise. "We can't even say we are engaged in an exhilarating struggle," one youth noted. "Our parents could say they were with Martin Luther King. What can we say?"

The black students' attitudes toward "success" were noticeably different from their white peers'. Growing up under affirmative action had had a marked effect on their sense of standards and assessments of themselves. Some doubted that colleges bend standards to admit minorities. "This university would not risk its reputation," one youth asserted, "by putting its stamp of approval on unqualified students. I think blacks and women probably have to be better than whites to get in here." Another young man who had just won a prestigious scholarship came up to me after class. "I have to admit," he said, "when I first learned about it, I did wonder if it was because I'm black." But like several of his classmates he had found a way to cope with his misgivings, dismissing them as just so much unhealthy "self-doubt."

Still others took this denial a step further, until they began to doubt the very concept of merit. Many discounted the validity not just of standardized tests but also of grade averages and other admissions criteria: all academic measures are undermined by bias, they said, and colleges regularly waive them to let in athletes and alumni children. Many students were similarly suspicious of what they saw as the "white world's" hiring practices. They doubted that employers really used meritocratic standards and figured that "networking" would serve them better than job qualifications.

Finally, and most troubling of all, many black students seemed ill at ease with their own achievement—as if it were somehow a betrayal of their race. Several admitted they had kept their high school grades secret in order to avoid charges that they were "selling out." One pre-med student described having to watch herself when she went home to Brooklyn: "If I speak in complete sentences, my girlfriends accuse me of putting on airs." She and others not only felt alienated from friends and family; they were also scared that mainstream success would somehow kill what was most authentically black within themselves. "We have to figure out how to play the game," said the same young woman, "without being swallowed by it. That is the dilemma every black pre-professional has to face." Her comment prompted a chorus of amens and a long discussion of ways to counter the threat of assimilation—everything from sporting corn-row braids to making time for volunteer work in the ghetto.

Students came back again and again to the matter of their black identity. Black history courses, racial awareness, proud separatism, and identity-building: this, they were convinced, was the ticket to their future, far more likely than any conventional approach to promote equality, and more important, to help them ease into the mainstream. "We can't integrate except as equals," they asserted over and over again. "We don't want to come in on the majority's terms."

This assumption made rough sense to the whites in the class and, for most of the semester, it went unchallenged. On the last day of class, though, one white innocently asked: "What exactly do you mean, when you talk about the black identity? Do you really come from a different culture? Didn't you also grow up in the suburbs and spend your weekends at shopping malls? Didn't you watch the TV shows we watched and go to the same movies?"

The black students offered a variety of answers. Yes, we're middle class, some said, but not in the same way you are. Their middle-class status was "more precarious," they said, and they felt closer to poor people. "My family spans the classes," explained one, "from me to my cousins in Harlem. I have relatives on welfare and others in prison. That means I see things differently." "Yes," said a woman across the table from him, "we identify with different people in the stories—in the books and the movies and the history. We identify with the outsiders and the have-nots." Others had a different answer: that the essence of black culture had its roots in Africa—in Egyptology, African-like rap music, and African influence on "black English." Still others talked about slavery and migration and about blacks' distinctive path through American history.

The white students listened respectfully, offering no

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judgment, and it was a young black woman who finally introduced a note of doubt. "It's true," she said, "that this is mostly about attitudes. I'm not sure it adds up to a really different culture." "That's the point," one black youth shot back, "we've been robbed of our culture. You're right, we have no culture—nothing except the so-called culture of the ghetto—but that's because it is always being destroyed." It wasn't an easy moment for anyone in the classroom, and there was a moment of silent regrouping. One or two blacks spoke up quietly about the problems that this posed—about how much harder this made it to "integrate as equals." Then the conversation petered out. There was no obvious way back to the beginning of the session—to the call for multicultural curricula and black identity building—but also no clear way for any of us to go forward from here.

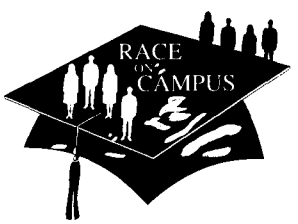
TAMAR JACOBY is writing a book on racial integration.

Affirmative action on campus.

SINS OF ADMISSION

By Dinesh D'Souza

When Michael Williams, head of the civil rights division of the Department of Education, sought to prevent American universities from granting minority-only scholarships, he blundered across the tripwire of affirmative action, the issue that is central to understanding racial tensions on campus and the furor over politically correct speech and the curriculum.



Nearly all American universities currently seek to achieve an ethnically diverse student body in order to prepare young people to live in an increasingly multiracial and multicultural society. Diversity is usually pursued through "proportional representation," a policy that attempts to shape each university class to approximate the proportion of blacks, Hispanics, whites, Asian Americans, and other groups in the general population. At the University of California, Berkeley, where such race balancing is official policy, an admissions report argues that proportional representation is the only just allocation of privileges for a state school in a democratic society, and moreover, "a broad diversity of backgrounds, values, and viewpoints is an integral part of a stimulating intellectual and cultural environment in which students educate one another."

The lofty goals of proportional representation are frustrated, however, by the fact that different racial groups perform very differently on academic indicators used by admissions officials, such as grades and standardized test scores. For example, on a scale of 400 to 1600, white and Asian American students on average score nearly 200 points higher than black students on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). Consequently, the only way for colleges to achieve ethnic proportionalism is to downplay or abandon merit criteria, and to accept students from typically underrepresented groups, such as blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians, over better-qualified students from among whites and Asian Americans.

At Ivy League colleges, for instance, where the median high school grade average of applicants approaches 4.0 and SAT scores are around 1300, many black, Hispanic, and American Indian students are granted admission with grade scores below 3.0 and SATs lower than 1000. Each year state schools such as Berkeley and the University of Virginia turn away hundreds of white and Asian American applicants with straight As and impressive extracurriculars, while accepting students from underrepresented groups with poor to mediocre academic and other credentials. John Bunzel, former president of San Jose State University, argues that since the pool of qualified minority students is small, selective colleges "soon realize they have to make big academic allowances" if they are going to meet affirmative action targets.

Although universities strenuously deny the existence of quota ceilings for Asians, it is mathematically impossible to raise the percentage of students from underrepresented groups without simultaneously reducing the percentage of students from overrepresented groups. Former Berkeley chancellor Ira Heyman has admitted and apologized for his university's discriminatory treatment of Asians, and this year the Department of Education found the University of California, Los Angeles, guilty of illegal anti-Asian policies. Stanford, Brown, and Yale are among the dozen or so prestigious institutions under close scrutiny by Asian groups.

For Asian Americans, the cruel irony is that preferential admissions policies, which are set up to atone for discrimination, seem to have institutionalized and legitimized discrimination against a minority group that is itself the victim of continuing prejudice in America. Moreover, for Asians, minority quotas that were intended as instruments of inclusion have become instruments of exclusion.

The second major consequence of proportional representation is not an overall increase in the number of blacks and other preferred minorities in American universities, but rather the *misplacement* of such students throughout higher education. In other words, a student who might be qualified for admission to a

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THE WRONG WAY TO REDUCE CAMPUS TENSIONS

A Statement by the National Association of Scholars

The academic community is alarmed by reports of intergroup tension at many colleges, including those long committed to equal opportunity. Unfortunately, educators have failed to reassess some recent policies and practices that, far from promoting tolerance and fairness, are undermining them. Worse yet, many have seized upon incidents of conflict to call for the extension of these policies and practices. They include:

- a willingness to admit students widely disparate in their level of preparation in order to make the campus demographically representative
- preferential hiring for faculty and staff positions determined by race, ethnicity, and gender
- racially or ethnically exclusive financial aid and academic counseling programs, as well as special administrators, ombudsmen, and resource centers assigned to serve as the putative representatives of selected student groups
- punitive codes restricting "insensitive" speech
- mandatory "sensitivity training" for incoming freshmen and sometimes for all students, faculty, and staff
- requirements that students take tendentious courses dealing with groups regarded as victimized
- a failure to enforce campus rules when violated by those promoting these policies or other "politically correct" causes

The National Association of Scholars believes that these policies and practices involve either the application of a double standard or the repudiation of appropriate intellectual criteria. Consequently, they undercut the academy's special sense of common purpose and prompt divisive calculations of group interest. Specifically, we believe that:

The admission of seriously underprepared students creates unrealistic expectations and frequently leads to frustration and resentment. Moreover, policies that target specific minority groups unfairly stigmatize all students in such groups, reinforcing negative stereotypes.

Two-track hiring threatens to produce a two-tiered faculty instead of a genuinely integrated one. While such hiring may well create "role models," they will be the wrong kind, encouraging the belief that it is the assertion of group power instead of the pursuit of individual achievement that reaps the most abundant rewards.

Disadvantaged students deserve ample assistance, yet disadvantage need not coincide with race or ethnicity. Those excluded are often frustrated by seeing individuals who may be no worse off than themselves receiving special treatment solely because of ancestry. Furthermore, bureaucracies created to serve or champion particular groups tend to have vested interests in emphasizing differences, fostering complaints, and maintaining the separation of those groups.

Safeguarding intellectual freedom is of critical importance to the academy. Thus, it is deeply disturbing to see the concept of "discriminatory harassment" stretched to cover the expression of unapproved thoughts about selected groups or criticism of policies assumed to benefit them. Higher education should prepare students to grapple with contrary or unpleasant ideas, not shield them from their content. What is more, if a highly permissive attitude toward the excoriation of the "privileged" accompanies the censorship of critical views about other groups, a backlash is predictable.

Tolerance is a core value of academic life, as is civility. College authorities should ensure that these values prevail. But tolerance involves a willingness, not to suppress, but to allow divergent opinions. Thus, "sensitivity training" programs designed to cultivate "correct thought" about complicated normative, social, and political issues do not teach tolerance but impose orthodoxy. And when these programs favor manipulative psychological techniques over honest discussion, they also undermine the intellectual purposes of higher education and anger those subjected to them.

If entire programs of study or required courses relentlessly pursue issues of "race, gender, and class" in preference to all other approaches to assessing the human condition, one can expect the increasing division of the campus along similar lines.

The discriminatory enforcement of campus regulations can only sap the legitimacy of academic authority and create a pervasive sense of mistrust. Indeed, should students feel that repeated violations not only go unpunished, but are actually appeased, the reckless may be tempted to take matters into their own hands. The final stage of discredit will be reached when students and faculty see in such appeasement attempts by administrators to justify their own programs of campus "reform."

The policies just described are generally well-intentioned. Nonetheless, if the goal <u>were</u> deliberately to aggravate campus tensions, the same policies might well be adopted. On the premise that the fair treatment of individuals can do as much to correct the current situation as the doctrine of collective guilt has done to create it, the National Association of Scholars urges the following:

- admitting inadequately prepared students only when realistic provision can be made for remediation
- maintaining nondiscriminatory hiring policies
- eliminating all forms of institutional segregation and preferential treatment determined by race and ethnicity, together with administrative positions that foster ethnic dissension
- protecting the expression of diverse opinion
- avoiding programs that attempt to impose "politically correct" thinking
- adding or retaining ethnic or gender studies courses only when they have genuine scholarly content and are not vehicles for political harangue or recruitment
- enforcing campus rules, even with respect to those who feel they are violating them in a good cause

The National Association of Scholars believes that the surest way to achieve educational opportunity for all and maintain a genuine sense of academic community is to evaluate each individual on the basis of personal achievement and promise. It is only as individuals united in the pursuit of knowledge that we can realize the ideal of a common intellectual life.

For copies of this or other NAS statements, or for additional information about the **National Association of Scholars** and its activities, including its fellows program, research center, speakers bureau, search service, newsletter, state and regional affiliates, conferences, local events, and the quarterly ***Academic Questions***, write to the **National Association of Scholars, Suite 250 East, Twenty Nassau Street, Princeton, New Jersey 08542**, or call **609-683-7878**.

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community college now finds himself at the University of Wisconsin. The student whose grades and extracurriculars are good enough for Wisconsin is offered admission to Bowdoin or Berkeley. The student who meets Bowdoin's or Berkeley's more demanding standards is accepted through affirmative action to Yale or Princeton. Somewhat cynically, one Ivy League official terms this phenomenon "the Peter Principle of university admissions."

Aware of the fact that many affirmative action students are simply not competitive with their peers, many colleges offer special programs in remedial reading, composition, and basic mathematics to enable disadvantaged students to keep pace. But enrollment in such programs is generally poor: students who are already experiencing difficulties with their regular course load often do not have the time or energy to take on additional classes. Consequently, the dropout rate of affirmative action students is extremely high. Figures from the Department of Education show that blacks and Hispanics are twice as likely as whites and Asians to drop out for academic reasons. A recent study of 1980 high school graduates who entered four-year colleges found that only 26 percent of black and Hispanic students

Mea Culpa

In the first meeting of my Harvard class on African American writers, an argument erupted over whether the reading list was sexist.

"Why are there no *women* writers on this syllabus?" asked one student, a white man.

The professor said that the major black authors of the period happened to be men.

Big mistake. For the next half hour or so, I learned that maybe we just weren't *aware* of black women writers in the mid-twentieth century. If they were considered unimportant, it was because white men determined what was thought significant about black culture and, deep down, white men want black women only for clandestine mistresses.

I sat quietly through the hubbub. Anything I said would have been automatically discounted. And that's not because I'm a conservative, you understand. On a quick checklist of liberal credentials, I have a pretty high rating. I'm pro-choice, pro-affirmative action, pro-gay rights, and pro-social spending, and I've never voted Republican in my life (except for William Weld). But none of that counts, because for reasons beyond my control I'm the archetype of political incorrectness. I grew up in Fairfield, Connecticut, where the country clubs have no black members because the town has no black citizens. My ancestors didn't come over on the Mayflower, but close enough. I attended prep school (Groton) and an Ivy League college (Yale). I'm not differently abled. I was born with a politically incorrect sexual orientation. What right do I have to complain?

Some of this isn't just well-deserved psychological retribution for all my previous advantages. Female and minority applicants get into graduate school over a white male with equal or better qualifications. "Sometimes minority applicants are almost dragged in kicking and screaming and told that this will be a great experience for them," says one admissions officer. I did get in, but because I'm a white male it's harder to stay here. Harvard gives full financial aid to all minority graduate students regardless of need. I pay about $8,000 a year, not including living expenses. This breeds cynicism, even among those who benefit from it. A black student told a friend of mine that he was about to reapply for his annual scholarship. "Oh, do you have to maintain a certain GPA?" my friend asked. "No," the student laughed. "I have to prove I'm still black."

If I weren't a white male, I'd have little difficulty getting a teaching job when I finish my dissertation. Female and minority Ph.D.s are so much in demand, they're courted like baseball's free agents. My female and minority peers will be snapped up as soon as they enter the job market. Merit is moot. This hiring is based on the idea that one can teach only what one is. That knocks me out of the ring: white men have nothing of value to impart.

But a lot to atone for. As a straight white man, I've probably committed date rape, seeing as it's now defined so loosely as to include a peck on the cheek that's not explicitly demanded. My whiteness has contributed to the oppression of non-whites since the beginning of history. I crushed the proletariat, shackled the slaves, exterminated the Indi—Native Americans, I mean.

It's not easy to retain intellectual integrity when only certain thoughts are considered acceptable. In a dinner conversation recently, I expressed doubt about the need for an English department seminar called "Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety." ("A theoretical consideration of transvestism in literature, history, film, and popular culture from Shakespeare to Peter Pan . . ."') Oops. Turns out I offended a gay man who had written extensively on the subject. Given the current link between the content of the curriculum and the self-esteem of the socially insecure, my questioning of the course was taken as a brazen attempt to invalidate his identity. As it happens, I hadn't intended anything of the kind. But it goes without saying that if I had wanted to criticize this man's lifestyle, I wouldn't have had any right to. Attributing qualities to people on account of their race, ethnic background, or sexual preference is only acceptable if you're attributing them to people like me.

One option, the one I usually take, is self-censorship, the keeping of politically incorrect thoughts to oneself. But some white men go further. They repent sins they weren't even aware they had committed. One student published his confession in *Lighthouse*, an undergraduate magazine. "As a male, the feminist interpretation and reading of art . . . makes me feel very guilty," he wrote, his grammar shaken by his guilt. "I have unknowingly perpetuated and contributed to this continuing objectivity [sic] of women, not only in the arts but in society. . . . However, I will continue to learn, and . . . try to become conscious of how I contribute to the inequality."

In this environment, keeping one's liberal convictions takes work. I have to remind myself that I *believe* in affirmative action, I support opening up the literary canon. I know I've had a privileged life. But that isn't enough for my correcter colleagues. Their idea of diversity is a chorus of voices all saying the same thing.

But maybe I shouldn't say that.

RICHARD BLOW

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had graduated by 1986.

Even taking into account other factors for leaving college, such as financial hardship, the data leave little doubt that preferential admissions seriously exacerbate what universities euphemistically term "the retention problem." An internal report that Berkeley won't release to the public shows that, of students admitted through affirmative action who enrolled in 1982, only 22 percent of Hispanics and 18 percent of blacks had graduated by 1987. Blacks and Hispanics not admitted through preferential programs graduated at the rates of 42 and 55 percent respectively.

Although most universities do everything they can to conceal the data about preferential admissions and dropout rates, administrators will acknowledge the fact that a large number of minority students who stay in college experience severe academic difficulties. These classroom pressures, compounded by the social dislocation that many black and Hispanic students feel in the new campus environment, are at the root of the serious racial troubles on the American campus.

It is precisely these pressures that thwart the high expectations of affirmative action students, who have been repeatedly assured by college recruiters that standards have not been abridged to let them in, that they belong at the university, indeed, that they provide a special perspective that the school could not hope to obtain elsewhere. Bewildered at the realities of college life, many minority students seek support and solace from others like them, especially older students who have traveled the unfamiliar paths. Thus begins the process of minority separatism and self-segregation on campus, which is now fairly advanced and which has come as such a surprise to universities whose catalogs celebrate integration and the close interaction of diverse ethnic groups.

Distinctive minority organizations, such as Afro-American societies and Hispanic student organizations, provide needed camaraderie, but they do not provide academic assistance to disadvantaged students. Instead, they offer an attractive explanation: classroom difficulties of minorities are attributed not to insufficient academic preparation, but to the pervasive atmosphere of bigotry on campus. In particular, both the curriculum and testing systems are said to embody a white male ethos that is inaccessible to minorities.

Through the political agitation of minority organizations, many black and Hispanic students seek to recover a confident identity and sense of place on campuses where they otherwise feel alienated and even inadequate. Consequently, minority activists at several universities now have elaborate campaigns to identify and extirpate bigotry, such as racism hotlines and mandatory consciousness-raising sessions directed at white students. In addition, activists demand that "institutional racism" be remedied through greater representation of blacks and Hispanics among administrators and faculty. The logical extreme of this trend is a bill that Assemblyman Tom Hayden has introduced in the California legislature that mandates not just proportional admissions but equal pass rates for racial groups in state universities.

Both survey data and interviews with students published in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* over the past few years show that many white students who are generally sympathetic to the minority cause become weary and irritated by the extent of preferential treatment and double standards involving minority groups on campus. Indeed, racial incidents frequently suggest such embitterment; at the University of Michigan, for example, the affirmative action office has been sent a slew of posters, letters, poems—many racist—objecting specifically to special treatment for blacks and deriding the competence of minority students at the university. An increasing number of students are coming to believe what undergraduate Jake Shapiro recently told the "MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour": "The reason why we have racial tensions at Rutgers is they have a very strong minority recruitment program, and this means that many of my friends from my hometown were not accepted even though they are more qualified."

Other students have complained that universities routinely recognize and subsidize minority separatist organizations, black and Hispanic fraternities, and even racially segregated residence quarters while they would never permit a club or fraternity to restrict membership to whites. A couple of American campuses have witnessed the disturbing rise of white student unions in bellicose resistance to perceived minority favoritism on campus.

A new generation of university leaders, weaned on the protest politics of the 1960s, such as Nannerl Keohane of Wellesley, James Freedman of Dartmouth, and Donna Shalala of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, are quite happy to attribute all opposition to resurgent bigotry. Some of this may be true, but as thoughtful university leaders and observers are now starting to recognize, administration policies may also be playing a tragic, counterproductive role. A redoubling of those policies, which is the usual response to racial tension, is not likely to solve the problem and might make it worse.

If universities wish to eliminate race as a factor in their students' decision-making, they might consider eliminating it as a factor in their own. It may be time for college leaders to consider basing affirmative action programs on socioeconomic disadvantage rather than ethnicity. This strategy would help reach those disadvantaged blacks who desperately need the education our colleges provide, but without the deleterious effects of racial head-counting. And it would set a color-blind standard of civilized behavior, which inspired the civil rights movement in the first place.

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How the new orthodoxy speaks power to truth.

THE CULT OF MULTICULTURALISM

By Fred Siegel

At the end of orientation week at Duke University, all entering first-year students are given an unusual sort of "blue book" test. In a letter from Duke's president, H. Keith Brodie, M.D., a psychiatrist, it is described as "the first exam in a Duke career." Although the test is ungraded and confidential, everyone is expected to take it. Some sample questions, all to be answered yes/no or agree/disagree:

Minority students should be expected to know their history and culture.
Men and women are equally capable of nurturing.
Equality implies sameness.
Pluralism implies relativism.
Feminists do not like men.
Jewish students should support all the policies and actions of Israel.

The Duke administrators who designed the test insist that there are no "correct" answers. Still, as students discover when they attend a compulsory follow-up encounter session with a group of faculty members trained by colleagues from the divinity school, there are correct attitudes. They are based on a document titled "Duke's Vision," which installs "multiculturalism" as the school's official ideology. Presented as if it embodied the views of the entire faculty (though in fact it was written by the office of the dean of student affairs and was never put before the faculty for its approval), the "Vision" lays out what might be described as the articles of faith that are supposed to underlie the curriculum.

It declares that "Duke's image of a humane and just society is founded upon multicultural equality," defined as an equality of officially designated groups. "This vision of multicultural equality affirms the uniqueness and worth of each person," the document asserts. "Uniculturalism," however, is a very bad thing: "Racism and sexism are two common expressions of uniculturalism. They and any other expressions of a worldview and value system based solely on any one culture are a denial of the humanity of others."

Despite its clotted language, the document makes it clear that any attempt to hold all individuals to the same standards will be condemned as uniculturalism and therefore as racism/sexism. The officially incited tension between individual uniqueness and group identity leaves students whipsawed. Men and women must succumb to either biology or androgyny. Blacks are forced either to deny their individuality by being made "representatives of their race," as Kenny Williams, a professor of English, puts it, or to deny their race by insisting on their individual uniqueness. For their part, whites, liable to reprimand for treating blacks either the same as everyone else or differently, are gradually being cowed into a sullen silence.

"Duke's Vision" is the expression not only of the intellectual winds sweeping a particular campus, but also, and more generally, of a new climate of ideas that has come to prevail on increasing numbers of American campuses. "Multiculturalism" is a useful shorthand for the new orthodoxy, but in fact the phenomenon is intellectually more complicated, and its roots reach into a number of different radical soils. In its most fundamental assumptions—that knowledge is power, that productions of the intellect and the imagination represent not the freedom of the writers and the artists who produced them but the relations of power that obtained in the writers' and the artists' time, and that every society generates ideological biases that none of its members can escape—the new orthodoxy owes its most immediate inspiration to Michel Foucault. And the deconstructionism that overwhelmed literary studies about a decade ago has had an auxiliary, emboldening effect: in imputing a certain attitude toward language to the West—"logocentrism," the product of "Eurocentrism"—deconstructionists seemed to provide a new ground for the rejection of Western traditions in toto, and to warrant the search for fundamental philosophical and cultural alternatives, some of which were sought in the cultures that the West has denied or oppressed. And so it was that a vulgarized and oversimplified version of deconstructionism joined with black and feminist agendas on campus. The insistence on the indeterminacy of meaning promised to free up the future.

But the roots of the new orthodoxy are not all so

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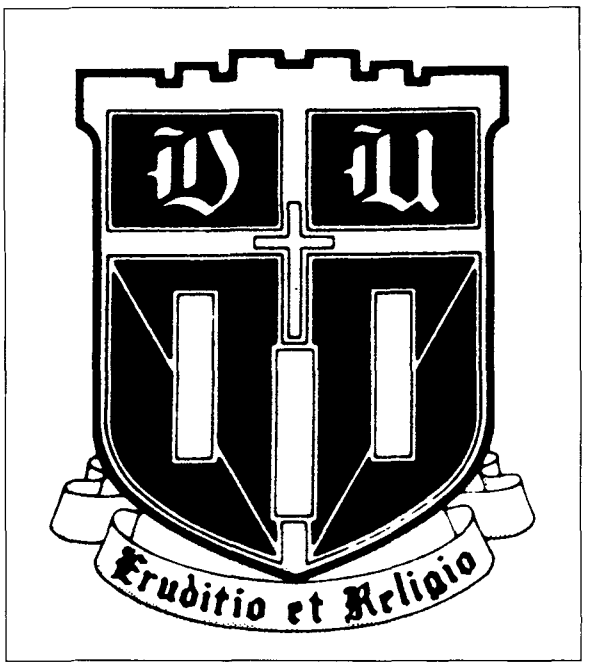
rarefied or so French. Multiculturalism is a profoundly American phenomenon that owes a great deal to the seismic changes in American intellectual life that were introduced in the '60s. It is impossible to listen to the multiculturalists and not hear echoes of Eldridge Cleaver, of R. D. Laing, of Herbert Marcuse. Recall Cleaver's (or his ghostwriter's) view that European civilization was simply a form of domination. Recall that though Laing himself ended up recanting his claim that mental illness was nothing more than a sociological label attached to anti-establishment behavior, his heirs still revere him for his critique of Western rationalism. And recall Marcuse's contempt for free speech and free thought as forms of "repressive tolerance." Marcuse has long been out of fashion, but his corrosive skepticism about the possibility of a discourse that has successfully freed itself from its social determinations and become genuinely democratic has been transmuted into the many campus codes that have been created for the regulation of "offensive" speech.

We are again witnessing the growth of conspiratorial forms of campus radicalism, which postulate an all-powerful "Establishment" out to crush racial minorities, women, and the poor. Only the locus of the "Establishment" has changed. Instead of being any particular cabal, "new mandarins" in particular institutions of power, the villainy now resides in the so-called canonical texts of Western civilization. The enemy is no longer a class but a whole tradition. A "new ideological structure," says Asa Hilliard of Georgia State, must be erected as part of a new "socially constructed reality."



The premise with which the multiculturalists begin is unexceptionable: that it is important to recognize and to celebrate the wide range of cultures that cohabit the United States. In what sounds like an inflection of traditional American pluralism, the multiculturalists argue that we must recognize difference, that difference is legitimate; in its kindlier versions, multiculturalism represents the discovery on the part of minority groups that they can play a part in molding the larger culture even as they are molded by it. And on the campus multiculturalism, defined more locally as the need to recognize cultural variations among students, has tried with some success to talk about how a racially and ethnically diverse student body can enrich everyone's education. Phillip Green, a political scientist at Smith and a thoughtful proponent of multiculturalism, notes that for a significant portion of the students, particularly minority students, the politics of identity is all-consuming. "Students" he says, "are unhappy with the thin gruel of rationalism. They require a therapeutic curriculum to overcome not straightforward racism but ignorant stereotyping."

But multiculturalism's hard-liners, who seem to make up the majority of the movement, damn as racism any attempt to draw the myriad of American groups into a common American culture. For these multiculturalists, differences are absolute, irreducible, intractable—occasions not for understanding but for separation. The multiculturalist, it turns out, is not especially interested in the great American hyphen, in the syncretistic (and therefore naturally tolerant) identities that allow Americans to belong to more than a single culture, to be both particularists and universalists.

This time-honored American mixture of assimilation and traditional allegiance is denounced as a danger to racial and gender authenticity. This is an extraordinary reversal of the traditional liberal commitment to a "truth" that transcends parochialisms. In the new race/class/gender dispensation (class being the least important of the three), universality is replaced by, among other things, feminist science, Nubian numerals (as part of an Afrocentric science), and what Marilyn Frankenstein of the University of Massachusetts-Boston describes as "ethnomathematics," in which the cultural basis of counting comes to the fore.

The multiculturalists insist on seeing all perspectives as tainted by the perceiver's particular point of view. Impartial knowledge, they argue, is not possible, because ideas are simply the expression of individual identity, or of the unspoken but inescapable assumptions that are inscribed in a culture or a language. The problem with this warmed-over Nietzscheanism is that it threatens to leave no ground for anybody to stand on. And so the multiculturalists make a leap, necessary for their own intellectual survival, and proceed to argue that there are some categories, such as race and gender, that do in fact embody an unmistakable knowledge of oppression. Victims are at least epistemologically lucky. Objectivity is a mask for oppression. And so an appalled former 1960s radical complained to me that self-proclaimed witches were teaching classes on witchcraft. "They're not teaching students how to think," she said, "they're telling them what to believe."

Multiculturalists attack the standard conceptual distinctions between rational/irrational, white/black, healthy/sick, male/female, history/myth, literacy/illiteracy as hidden expressions of a hierarchy designed to "privilege" the first half of the paired categories. But there's an irony here: what begins as an attempt to

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expand our mental horizons ends up by giving the second half of the pairing superior standing and a rightful claim to power. For example, Houston Baker Jr., a specialist in Afro-American literature and the Albert M. Greenfield Professor of Human Relations at the University of Pennsylvania, asserts that there is no need to mourn the passing "of the old order of literacy." Baker believes that if students can be freed from Western civilization, in the form of "whitemale" core reading lists (he compares the core reading lists to the deadly cores of a nuclear reactor), then "the powerful, syncretic, corporally minimalistic urgings of African American rap music signal this *défense légitime* of a new humanity and a new humanities that will outlast the 'crisis' and create new room for the new people." For Baker, the incoming president of the Modern Language Association, it is as if literacy were literally the problem.

But none of the reversals is as sad, as ridiculous, or as dangerous as the white/black reversal, wherein Herodotus and other ancient writers are combed for all references to North African and Levantine persons and events, and the myth of the African origins of all civilization displaces the conventional history of the Greek origins of Western culture. Classicists long ago concluded that all the African elements in the history of archaic Greece do not amount to an African origin for Western culture—but the multiculturalists are interested in feeling, not in learning. A prominent black professor who calls himself a "real world leftist" (and who asked to remain anonymous) explained to me the appeal of presenting a mythical African past as history: "It's easier for the faculty to level down by arguing that everything in the curriculum is just ideology than it is to pile on the work that's required, because deep in their hearts many of the ideologues don't believe that these minority kids can cut it." By contrast, "If you try to level up you face charges of racism."

Perhaps the most enabling fiction of multiculturalism is that there has been a single core curriculum composed of the canonical texts of Western civilization that is widely forced, with great harm to minorities, upon students across the country. "The classic texts of the Western tradition," a Wesleyan professor told me, "have been imposed on students as a form of male domination." A student leader at Stanford, where the recent public debate over the curriculum began, has insisted, "The implicit message of Western culture is, 'Nigger Go Home.' " Both speak to the notion that a core curriculum composed of such DWEMs (Dead White European Males) as Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, and Shakespeare has been required for virtually all college students. The truth is, however, that such cores hardly exist anymore. According to the National Endowment for the Humanities, 80 percent of college students graduate without a Western civilization course. Thirty-seven percent graduate without any history course at all.

A corollary fiction is that until the multiculturalists stepped into the breach, books about minority experiences in America were largely absent from the curriculum. In fact, one of the great academic achievements of the past quarter century has been the vast opening to new perspectives in Afro-American, women's, labor, and Third World history and literature. I repeatedly asked prominent academics across the country to name standard courses or texts at their own or other schools that failed to reflect the new scholarship and the diversity of American life. Not a single course or a single text was cited. Instead, as I was told by Paula Rothenberg—a professor at New Jersey's Paterson State College whose multicultural reader, *Racism and Sexism: An Integrated Study*, has caused a stir on several campuses—the problem is "not specifics" but "a racism and a sexism which are pervasive" because they are largely "unconscious."

Her formulation has been widely echoed. Redemption, according to James Scanlon, dean of arts and sciences at Clarion State University in Pennsylvania, lies in "infusing race, ethnicity, and gender across the curriculum." Similarly, at Miami-Dade Junior College recent changes stipulate that "diversity" must be incorporated in every course. And "cooperation" is to weigh heavily in tenure and promotion decisions. At both schools there are plans to re-educate recalcitrant faculty. Gary Kelsey of Penn State, speaking for an increasing number of advisers and admissions counselors, insists that themes of "tolerance" should be integrated throughout the curriculum. "Faculty who fail to demonstrate an active agenda . . . to embrace the richness of diversity" should, Kelsey suggested, be told they will not be tenured.

The new bureaucratic factor, observes Adolph Reed Jr., professor of political science at Yale, is the role of administrators. In the 1960s administrators, often academics themselves, were fighting to hold back ideologically driven changes; today they're initiating them. Drawing on the Carnegie Foundation's call for a more "caring" campus, and led by college presidents with "helping professionals" in tow, administrators are now redefining the purpose of higher education. Some colleges have in effect reverted to their earlier roles as religious/confessional institutions. Their job is no longer one of conveying knowledge: Why would it be, if knowledge is merely an instrument of power?

At Duke, close ties among the administration, the

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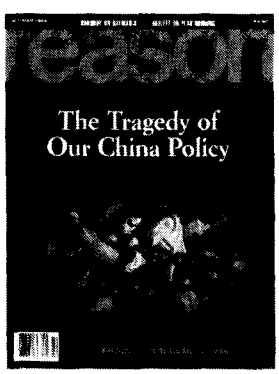
"Government agents befriended traders, visited their homes, and shared their meals. They attended their parties, played with their children, and won their trust. They deluded the defendants and then ensnared them in order to prosecute them for the moral equivalent of jaywalking."
—TRADER X, "SNARING THE CHICAGO 46"

"Every five years in Peru we have elections. We elect a dictator every five years. You've confused it with democracy, and so have we."
—HERNANDO DE SOTO, "WHAT'S WRONG WITH LATIN AMERICAN ECONOMIES"



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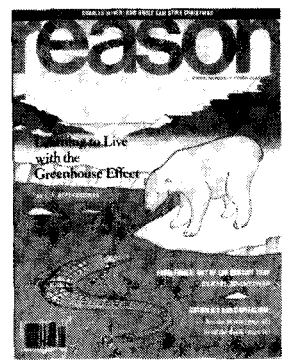
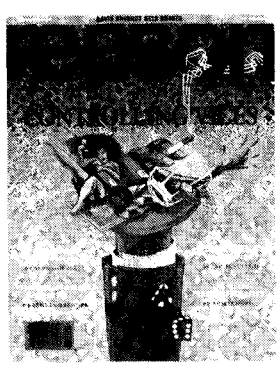
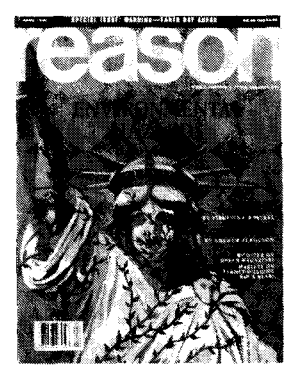


"For all the right-wing grousing about Washington and the majesty of the government 'closest to the people' (yeah, like right inside their wallets), state and local governments in America are notoriously shady enterprises, demonstrating the twin evils of local monopoly and a cozy-with-the-powers press."
—THOMAS W. HAZLETT, "LOCAL HEROES"



"When the law determines vice and virtue, everyone competes to determine the law. We end up with a struggle between those who can't tolerate the idea that anyone anywhere is having fun and those who can't tolerate the idea that anyone anywhere disapproves of their fun."
—VIRGINIA I. POSTREL, "SIN AND DECADENCE"

"Dr. Ehrlich was an entomologist by training, and some immediately recognized that after many years of rigorous study, he had lost the capacity to distinguish between an army of hideous little arthropods swarming over his desk in a Stanford laboratory and an upwardly mobile population of Homo sapiens building tract houses in Palo Alto."
—ANDREW FERGUSON, "APOCALYPSE WHENEVER"



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support staff, and the "academic left" have led to a redefinition of goals. Duke's zeal doesn't stop with its orientation program. After a black student organization on campus alleged faculty racism, President Brodie promised to ferret out instances of subtle bias, which he called "the New Racism." Brodie has initiated a group with the Committee on Public Safety-like title of the "Committee to Address Discrimination in the Classroom." This body, which was given the charge of uncovering faculty racism in the classroom, found very little in the way of overt bias. But in its monitoring of the classroom it did discover examples of "disrespectful facial expressions or body language aimed at black students." The committee has promised to continue its work.

At the University of Texas at Austin, the required sensitivity is more localized if no less extreme. "The army hasn't been called in to UT and the university hasn't been closed," warned Barbara Harlow, a professor of English, "but we need to recognize that there are academic death squads operating on our campus." Harlow was speaking last fall at a rally on behalf of the new, politicized version of E306, a course required for the 60 percent of the first-year students who need remedial English. The rally, attended by half a dozen members of the English department, had been organized by minority activists. They rallied in support of what one faculty member approvingly called "the politicization of entering freshmen and their curriculum."

With encouragement from the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Texas's huge English department of more than eighty members, in a shift of resources, closed down its language lab, which had served primarily Hispanic, Asian, and other minority students struggling to master English. To remedy student writing and rhetoric problems, the department redesigned E306 around the theme of white male racism. The proposed texts for the remedial writing course are limited to Rothenberg's reader on racism; a series of 1950s Texas civil rights court cases; and a tract listing forty-six varieties of white male privilege.

Senior writing professor Maxine Hairston, a self-described liberal, sees the call for the politicization of E306 as a self-serving excuse to avoid the hard job of teaching the basics. "Probably only four of the eighty members of the Texas English department," she says, "believe that a central mission of their department is to teach people how to write." At a meeting of the faculty committee planning the course, some members complained that in the name of diversity a single mandatory reading list was being imposed in place of the variety offered in earlier versions of the course. The response, they told me, was that a range of opinions was not a good idea for the course.

At Smith College in Massachusetts, the impulse to impose the new orthodoxy directly on the curriculum was beaten back on the grounds of academic freedom and a reluctance to impose requirements of any kind. But backdoor attempts have produced polarization nonetheless. Smith's president, Mary Dunn, is pushing a sweeping affirmative action agenda, which also links some faculty raises and administrative salaries to a commitment to multiculturalism. To make sure that everyone knows the ideological ground rules, Smith's Office of Student Affairs distributes a sheet to all students listing proscribed attitudes including "ableism—oppression of the differently abled by the temporarily able," "ageism," and "lookism," defined as, among other things, "the construction of a standard for beauty/attractiveness."

Through a combination of sensitivity training sessions and the ideological weight of a document issued by the college president called "The Smith Design," the administration has made it clear that no criticism of racial quotas in admissions and student life, no matter how thoughtful, will be taken seriously. The students, Smith English professor Eric Reeves told me, are subtly intimidated. "They censor themselves in class out of a fear of both peer pressure and the possibility of sanctions." In keeping with "The Smith Design" and activist student pressure, complaints about student and faculty behavior are aggressively monitored by the campus affirmative action officer.

In an incident this past fall that has deeply divided Smith, the affirmative action officer was accused of overstepping her authority for calling a female professor of government on the carpet after a student complained that an exam essay question was anti-Muslim. (The question: "Is Islam useful in the modern world? Describe the role of Islam in the political development of two countries in the Middle East since World War II.") The affirmative action officer says she was only trying to adjudicate; the faculty member saw a threat to academic freedom. After a faculty vote of 62-40 in support of the affirmative action officer's ongoing mediating role, some now fear that course content could become a matter of political negotiation—and ultimately of raw power.

Stanley Fish, chair of Duke's English department, professor of law, and self-described "academic leftist," is giving a dazzling performance. The overflow audience sits rapt as Fish, who made his reputation as a critic of Renaissance poetry and a theorist of "self-consuming artifacts," demonstrates the inability of words to represent reality. Time and again he shows that what is clearly X in a legal text can, by dint of imposed interpretation, become not X. For Fish, texts are merely pretexts—

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Ugh! Oops.

The following are some of the multicultural no-nos, which appear in the *Dictionary of Cautionary Words and Phrases.* According to its foreword, the dictionary was the brainchild of the 1989 Multicultural Management Program Fellows, a group of journalists from, among other newspapers, *The Baltimore Sun, New York Newsday, Dallas Times Herald, Chicago Tribune, Atlanta Journal-Constitution,* and *Miami Herald.* Their aim? Politically correct journalism. It is not a parody.

African-American: Also used for black. Preferred by some, but not universally accepted. May be objectionable to those persons preferring black.

Articulate: Can be considered offensive when referring to a minority, particularly a black person, and his or her ability to handle the English language. The usage suggests that "those people" are not considered well-educated, articulate, and the like.

Banana: An offensive term referring to Asian Americans who allegedly have abandoned their culture. Objectionable because no person or group can appropriately attach judgmental terms to others. Just as objectionable: Coconut for Mexican-Americans and Oreo for black Americans.

Barracuda: A negative generalization of persons without morals and/or ethical standards or judgments. Many times directed at forceful women. Do not use.

Beauty: Avoid descriptive terms of beauty when not absolutely necessary. For instance, do not use "blond and blue-eyed" unless you would also use "brown-haired and brown-eyed" as a natural measure of attractiveness.

Beefcake: Objectionable when referring to male physical attractiveness.

Burly: An adjective too often associated with large black men, implying ignorance, and considered offensive in this context.

Buxom: Offensive reference to a woman's chest. Do not use. See "Woman."

Codger: Offensive reference to a senior citizen. See "Senior Citizens."

Community: Implies a monolithic culture in which people act, think, and vote in the same way. Do not use, as in Asian, Hispanic, black, or gay community. Be more specific as to what the group is: e.g., black residents in a northside neighborhood.

Coot: Offensive reference to senior citizen. See "Senior Citizens."

Dear: A term of endearment objectionable to some. Usage such as "He was a dear man" or "She is a dear" should be avoided.

Dutch treat: To share the cost, as in a date. Implies that Dutch people are cheap.

Fried chicken: A loaded phrase when used carelessly and as a stereotype, referring to the cuisine of black people. Also applies to watermelon.

Gay: Refers only to homosexual men. See "Homosexual."

Geezer: An objectionable reference to a senior citizen. Avoid using. See "Senior Citizens."

Homosexual: The preferred term for people attracted to members of the same sex. Gay refers only to homosexual men; lesbian refers only to homosexual women. Derisive terms such as dyke, fruit, fairy, or queer are highly objectionable.

Illegal Alien: Often used to refer to Mexicans and Latin Americans believed to be in the United States without visas; the preferred term is undocumented worker or undocumented resident.

Impotent: A clinical term referring to male sexual dysfunction. Not proper when used to stereotype or characterize males.

Inscrutable: An adjective often carelessly applied to Asian Americans. Avoid all terms that stereotype entire groups.

Ivan: A common and offensive substitute for a Soviet person.

Jew: Refers to people of the Jewish faith. Some people find use of Jew alone offensive and prefer Jewish person. Not a synonym for stingy. Always used as a noun, never a verb.

Johns: Men who frequent prostitutes, but not a proper generic term for men or bathrooms.

Leader: Use with caution. Be more specific: black politician, black activist. Implies person has approval of an entire group of people.

Man: May be used when both men and women are involved and a more clearly defined term is not available. Frequently the best choice is a substitute, such as "humanity," "a person," or "an individual."

Man, The: A reference to the establishment, mainly white. Could be offensive.

"The Myth": Avoid any word, description, or phrase that contributes to the stereotype of black males as strictly athletic, well proportioned, or having high sexual drives and exaggerated sex organs.

Oriental: Unacceptable to some Asian Americans. Use Asian American or Asian(s), the specific term.

Peg leg: Use prosthesis or artificial limb. Also avoid hook.

Qualified minorities: Do not use in stories about affirmative action. Unnecessary description that indicates minorities are generally unqualified.

Retarded: An adjective meaning slow or backward in mental or emotional development. Refer to specific medical condition. Do not use retard, stupid, or ignorant.

Rubbing noses: Allegedly an Eskimo kiss. However, Eskimos don't rub noses and object to the characterization. Do not use.

Senior citizens: Do not use for anyone under 65. In general, avoid ageism by giving ages where relevant. Do not describe people as elderly, senile, matronly, or well preserved. Also do not identify people as grandparents unless it is relevant to the story. Do not use dirty old man, codger, coot, geezer, silver fox, old-timers, Pop, old buzzard. Blue-haired is objectionable when used to characterize older people.

Soulful: Can be an objectionable adjective when applied strictly to blacks. Another potentially objectionable adjective: articulate. See "Articulate."

Stunning: Avoid physical description. See "Woman."

Swarthy: Refers to darkened skin color. Avoid all unnecessary references to skin color, such as yellow. Other objectionable terms are paleface, redskin, and lily-white.

Sweetie: Objectionable term of endearment. Do not use.

Ugh: A guttural sound used to mimic American Indian speech. Highly offensive.

Watermelon: See "Fried chicken."

White bread: A term denoting blandness. Could have racial connotation.

Whore: Derogatory, along with trollop, tart, loose woman, hussy.

Without rhythm: A stereotype about whites. Implies that others have rhythm, also a stereotype.

Woman: The preferred term for a female adult. Girl is appropriate only for those 17 years old and under. Avoid gal and lady. Also avoid derogatory terms for women, such as skirt, broad, chick, bimbo, bumbo, babe, ball and chain, and little woman. Also avoid adjectives describing female physical attributes or mannerisms such as pert, petite, foxy, buxom, fragile, feminine, stunning, gorgeous, statuesque, or full-figured. ●

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exercises in "nothing but manipulation and power." Asked during the question period if the First Amendment isn't something more than an expression of power, Fish rasps, "Free speech? Yeah, tell me another one." A graduate student, puzzled by the way Fish has folded the world into the alphabet, asks the professor where his kind of "academic leftism" is going. "I want them," responds Fish, referring to students and faculty, "to do what I tell them to." Later, he explains to a small group: "I want to be able to walk into any first-rate faculty anywhere and dominate it, shape it to my will. I'm fascinated by my own will."

Fish represents an extreme case, but similar formulations of academic cultism, paranoia, and power-mongering are an increasing part of the intellectual atmosphere on many campuses. One source of relief, common to student life everywhere, is mercifully available. Many students, confronted with the new orthodoxy in its several manifestations, find it funny. Parodies and jokes about "de-cons," "PCs," and "multicult" are becoming campus commonplaces. (Q: What do you get when you cross a deconstructionist with a mafioso? A: Someone who makes you an offer you can't understand.) Multiculturalism is in trouble, says the University of Pennsylvania's Alan Kors, because "you can't distinguish between the parody and the 'real' thing."

But the thing *is* real. A great deal of what's turning the humanities in America into an intellectual backwater has already been institutionalized, with junior faculty and academic administrators alike having a vested interest in a multiculturalist curriculum. Finally the situation is not funny at all. The future may well lie with the Stanford student who, when asked about studying important non-Western trends such as Islamic fundamentalism and Japanese capitalism, responded, "Who gives a damn about those things? I want to study myself." ●

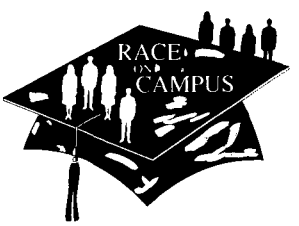
What's wrong with 'P.C.'

THE VALUE OF THE CANON

By Irving Howe

I.

Of all the disputes agitating the American campus, the one that seems to me especially significant is that over "the canon." What should be taught in the humanities and social sciences, especially in introductory courses? What is the place of the classics? How shall we respond to those professors who attack "Eurocentrism" and advocate "multiculturalism"? This is not the sort of tedious quarrel that now and then flutters through the academy; it involves matters of public urgency. I propose to see this dispute, at first, through a narrow, even sectarian lens, with the hope that you will come to accept my reasons for doing so.



Here, roughly, are the lines of division. On one side stand (too often, fall) the cultural "traditionalists," who may range politically across the entire spectrum. Opposing them is a heterogeneous grouping of mostly younger teachers, many of them veterans of the 1960s, which includes feminists, black activists, Marxists, deconstructionists, and various mixtures of these.

At some colleges and universities traditional survey courses of world and English literature, as also of social thought, have been scrapped or diluted. At others they are in peril. At still others they will be. What replaces them is sometimes a mere option of electives, sometimes "multicultural" courses introducing material from Third World cultures and thinning out an already thin sampling of Western writings, and sometimes courses geared especially to issues of class, race, and gender. Given the notorious lethargy of academic decision-making, there has probably been more clamor than change; but if there's enough clamor, there will be change.

University administrators, timorous by inclination, are seldom firm in behalf of principles regarding education. Subjected to enough pressure, many of them will buckle under. So will a good number of professors who vaguely subscribe to "the humanist tradition" but are not famously courageous in its defense. Academic liberalism has notable virtues, but combativeness is not often one of them. In the academy, whichever group goes on the offensive gains an advantage. Some of those who are now attacking "traditionalist" humanities and social science courses do so out of sincere persuasion; some, from a political agenda (what was at

IRVING HOWE is at work on a book about the novel titled *Selected Short Subjects*. His *Selected Writings: 1950-1990* was published last fall by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

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first solemnly and now is half-ironically called p.c.—politically correct); and some from an all-too-human readiness to follow the academic fashion that, for the moment, is "in."

Can we find a neutral term to designate the anti-traditionalists? I can't think of a satisfactory one, so I propose an unsatisfactory one: let's agree to call them the insurgents, though in fact they have won quite a few victories. In the academy these professors are often called "the left" or "the cultural left," and that is how many of them see themselves. But this is a comic misunderstanding, occasionally based on ignorance. In behalf of both their self-awareness and a decent clarity of debate, I want to show that in fact the socialist and Marxist traditions have been close to traditionalist views of culture. Not that the left hasn't had its share of ranters (I exclude Stalinists and hooligans) who, in the name of "the revolution," were intent upon jettisoning the culture of the past; but generally such types have been a mere marginal affliction treated with disdain.

Let me cite three major figures. Here is Georg Lukacs, the most influential Marxist critic of the twentieth century:

> Those who do not know Marxism may be surprised at the respect for *the classical heritage of mankind* which one finds in the really great representatives of that doctrine. (Emphasis added.)

TROTSKY BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Here is Leon Trotsky, arguing in 1924 against a group of Soviet writers who felt that as the builders of "a new society" they could dismiss the "reactionary culture" of the past:

> If I say that the importance of *The Divine Comedy* lies in the fact that it gives me an understanding of the state of mind of certain classes in a certain epoch, this means that I transform it into *a mere historical document*. . . . How is it thinkable that there should be not a historical but *a directly aesthetic relationship* between us and a medieval Italian book? This is explained by the fact that in class society, in spite of its changeability, there are certain common features. Works of art developed in a medieval Italian city can affect us too. What does this require? . . . That these feelings and moods shall have received such broad, intense, powerful expression as to have raised them above the limitations of the life of those days. (Emphasis added.)

Trotsky's remarks could serve as a reply to those American professors of literature who insist upon the omnipresence of ideology as it seeps into and perhaps saturates literary texts, and who scoff that only "formalists" believe that novels and poems have autonomous being and value. In arguing, as he did in his book *Literature and Revolution*, that art must be judged by "its own laws," Trotsky seems not at all p.c. Still less so is Antonio Gramsci, the Italian Marxist, whose austere opinions about education might make even our conservatives blanch:

> Latin and Greek were learnt through their grammar, mechanically, but the accusation of formalism and aridity is very unjust. . . . In education one is dealing with children in whom one has to inculcate certain habits of diligence, precision, poise (even physical poise), ability to concentrate on specific subjects, which cannot be acquired without the mechanical repetition of disciplined and methodical acts.

These are not the isolated ruminations of a few intellectuals; Lukacs, Trotsky, and Gramsci speak with authority for a view of culture prevalent in the various branches of the Marxist (and also, by the way, the non-Marxist) left. And that view informed many movements of the left. There were the Labor night schools in England bringing to industrial workers elements of the English cultural past; there was the once-famous Rand School of New York City; there were the reading circles that Jewish workers, in both Eastern Europe and American cities, formed to acquaint themselves with Tolstoy, Heine, and Zola. And in Ignazio Silone's novel *Bread and Wine* we have a poignant account of an underground cell in Rome during the Mussolini years that reads literary works as a way of holding itself together.

My interest here is not to vindicate socialism or Marxism—that is another matter. Nor is there anything sacrosanct about the opinions I have quoted or their authors. But it is surely worth establishing that the claims of many academic insurgents to be speaking from a left, let alone a Marxist, point of view are highly dubious. Very well, the more candid among them might reply, so we're not of the left, at least we're not of the "Eurocentric" left. To recognize that would at

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least help clear the atmosphere. More important, it might shrink the attractiveness of these people in what is perhaps the only area of American society where the label of "the left" retains some prestige.

What we are witnessing on the campus today is a strange mixture of American populist sentiment and French critical theorizing as they come together in behalf of "changing the subject." The populism provides an underlying structure of feeling, and the theorizing provides a dash of intellectual panache. The populism releases anti-elitist rhetoric, the theorizing releases highly elitist language.

American populism, with its deep suspicion of the making of distinctions of value, has found expression not only in native sages (Henry Ford: "History is bunk") but also in the writings of a long line of intellectuals—indeed, it's only intellectuals who can give full expression to anti-intellectualism. Such sentiments have coursed through American literature, but only recently, since the counterculture of the 1960s, have they found a prominent place in the universities.

As for the French theorizing—metacritical, quasi-philosophical, and at times of a stupefying verbal opacity—it has provided a buttress for the academic insurgents. We are living at a time when all the once-regnant world systems that have sustained (also distorted) Western intellectual life, from theologies to ideologies, are taken to be in severe collapse. This leads to a mood of skepticism, an agnosticism of judgment, sometimes a world-weary nihilism in which even the most conventional minds begin to question both distinctions of value and the value of distinctions. If you can find projections of racial, class, and gender bias in both a Western by Louis L'Amour and a classical Greek play, and if you have decided to reject the "elitism" said to be at the core of literary distinctions, then you might as well teach the Western as the Greek play. You can make the same political points, and more easily, in "studying" the Western. And if you happen not to be well informed about Greek culture, it certainly makes things still easier.

I grew up with the conviction that what Georg Lukacs calls "the classical heritage of mankind" is a precious legacy. It came out of historical circumstances often appalling, filled with injustice and outrage. It was often, in consequence, alloyed with prejudice and flawed sympathies. Still, it was a heritage that had been salvaged from the nightmares, occasionally the glories, of history, and now we would make it "ours," we who came from poor and working-class families. This "heritage of mankind" (which also includes, of course, Romantic and modernist culture) had been denied to the masses of ordinary people, trained into the stupefaction of accepting, even celebrating, their cultural deprivations. One task of political consciousness was therefore to enable the masses to share in what had been salvaged from the past—the literature, art, music, thought—and thereby to reach an active relation with these. That is why many people, not just socialists but liberals, democrats, and those without political tags, kept struggling for universal education. It was not a given; it had to be won. Often, winning proved to be very hard.

Knowledge of the past, we felt, could humanize by promoting distance from ourselves and our narrow habits, and this could promote critical thought. Even partly to grasp a significant experience or literary work of the past would require historical imagination, a sense of other times, which entailed moral imagination, a sense of other ways. It would create a kinship with those who had come before us, hoping and suffering as we have, seeking through language, sound, and color to leave behind something of enduring value.

By now we can recognize that there was a certain naïveté in this outlook. The assumption of progress in education turned out to be as problematic as similar assumptions elsewhere in life. There was an underestimation of human recalcitrance and sloth. There was a failure to recognize what the twentieth century has taught us: that aesthetic sensibility by no means assures ethical value. There was little anticipation of the profitable industry of "mass culture," with its shallow kitsch and custom-made dreck. Nevertheless, insofar as we retain an attachment to the democratic idea, we must hold fast to an educational vision somewhat like the one I've sketched. Perhaps it is more an ideal to be approached than a goal to be achieved; no matter. I like the epigrammatic exaggeration, if it is an exaggeration, of John Dewey's remark that "the aim of education is to enable individuals to continue their education."

This vision of culture and education started, I suppose, at some point in the late eighteenth century or the early nineteenth century. It was part of a great sweep of human aspiration drawing upon Western traditions from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment. It spoke in behalf of such liberal values as the autonomy of the self, tolerance for a plurality of opinions, the rights of oppressed national and racial groups, and soon, the claims of the women's movements. To be sure, these values were frequently violated—that has been true for every society in every phase of world history. But the criticism of such violations largely invoked the declared values themselves, and this remains true for all our contemporary insurgencies. Some may sneer at "Western hegemony," but knowingly or not, they do so in the vocabulary of Western values.

By invoking the "classical heritage of mankind" I don't propose anything fixed and unalterable. Not at all. There are, say, seven or eight writers and a similar number of social thinkers who are of such preeminence that they must be placed at the very center of this heritage; but beyond that, plenty of room remains for disagreement. All traditions change, simply through survival. Some classics die. Who now reads Ariosto? A loss, but losses form part of tradition too. And new arrivals keep being added to the roster of classics—it is not handed down from Mt. Sinai or the

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University of Chicago. It is composed and fought over by cultivated men and women. In a course providing students a mere sample of literature, there should be included some black and women writers who, because of inherited bias, have been omitted in the past. Yet I think we must give a central position to what Professor John Searle in a recent *New York Review of Books* article specifies as "a certain Western intellectual tradition that goes from, say, Socrates to Wittgenstein in philosophy, and from Homer to James Joyce in literature. . . . It is essential to the liberal education of young men and women in the United States that they should receive some exposure to at least some of the great works of this intellectual tradition."

Nor is it true that most of the great works of the past are bleakly retrograde in outlook—to suppose that is a sign of cultural illiteracy. Bring together in a course on social thought selections from Plato and Aristotle, Machiavelli and Rousseau, Hobbes and Locke, Nietzsche and Freud, Marx and Mill, Jefferson and Dewey, and you have a wide variety of opinions, often clashing with one another, sometimes elusive and surprising, always richly complex. These are some of the thinkers with whom to begin, if only later to deviate from. At least as critical in outlook are many of the great poets and novelists. Is there a more penetrating historian of selfhood than Wordsworth? A more scathing critic of society than the late Dickens? A mind more devoted to ethical seriousness than George Eliot? A sharper critic of the corrupting effects of money than Balzac or Melville?

HOMER BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

These writers don't necessarily endorse our current opinions and pieties—why should they? We read them for what Robert Frost calls "counterspeech," the power and brilliance of *other minds*, and if we can go "beyond" them, it is only because they are behind us.

What is being invoked here is not a stuffy obeisance before dead texts from a dead past, but rather a critical engagement with living texts from powerful minds still very much "active" in the present. And we should want our students to read Shakespeare and Tolstoy, Jane Austen and Kafka, Emily Dickinson and Leopold Senghor, not because they "support" one or another view of social revolution, feminism, and black self-esteem. They don't, in many instances; and we don't read them for the sake of enlisting them in a cause of our own. We should want students to read such writers so that they may learn to enjoy the activity of mind, the pleasure of forms, the beauty of language—in short, the arts in their own right.

By contrast, there is a recurrent clamor in the university for "relevance," a notion hard to resist (who wishes to be known as irrelevant?) but proceeding from an impoverished view of political life, and too often ephemeral in its excitements and transient in its impact. I recall seeing in the late 1960s large stacks of Eldridge Cleaver's *Soul on Ice* in the Stanford University bookstore. Hailed as supremely "relevant" and widely described as a work of genius, this book has fallen into disuse in a mere two decades. Cleaver himself drifted off into some sort of spiritualism, ceasing thereby to be "relevant." Where, then, is *Soul on Ice* today? What lasting value did it impart?

American culture is notorious for its indifference to the past. It suffers from the provincialism of the contemporary, veering wildly from fashion to fashion, each touted by the media and then quickly dismissed. But the past is the substance out of which the present has been formed, and to let it slip away from us is to acquiesce in the thinness that characterizes so much of our culture. Serious education must assume, in part, an adversarial stance toward the very society that sustains it—a democratic society makes the wager that it's worth supporting a culture of criticism. But if that criticism loses touch with the heritage of the past, it becomes weightless, a mere compendium of momentary complaints.

Several decades ago, when I began teaching, it could be assumed that entering freshmen had read in high school at least one play by Shakespeare and one novel by Dickens. That wasn't much, but it was something. These days, with the disintegration of the high schools, such an assumption can seldom be made. The really dedicated college teachers of literature feel that, given the bazaar of elective courses an entering student encounters and the propaganda in behalf of "rele-

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vance," there is likely to be only one opportunity to acquaint students with a smattering—indeed, the merest fragment—of the great works from the past. Such teachers take pleasure in watching the minds and sensibilities of young people opening up to a poem by Wordsworth, a story by Chekhov, a novel by Ellison. They feel they have planted a seed of responsiveness that, with time and luck, might continue to grow. And if this is said to be a missionary attitude, why should anyone quarrel with it?

II.

Let me now mention some of the objections one hears in academic circles to the views I have put down here, and then provide brief replies.

By requiring students to read what you call "classics" in introductory courses, you impose upon them a certain worldview—and that is an elitist act.

In some rudimentary but not very consequential sense, all education entails the "imposing" of values. There are people who say this is true even when children are taught to read and write, since it assumes that reading and writing are "good."

In its extreme version, this idea is not very interesting, since it is not clear how the human race could survive if there were not some "imposition" from one generation to the next. But in a more moderate version, it is an idea that touches upon genuine problems.

Much depends on the character of the individual teacher, the spirit in which he or she approaches a dialogue of Plato, an essay by Mill, a novel by D. H. Lawrence. These can be, and have been, used to pummel an ideological line into the heads of students (who often show a notable capacity for emptying them out again). Such pummeling is possible for all points of view but seems most likely in behalf of totalitarian politics and authoritarian theologies, which dispose their adherents to fanaticism. On the other hand, the texts I've mentioned, as well as many others, can be taught in a spirit of openness, so that students are trained to read carefully, think independently, and ask questions. Nor does this imply that the teacher hides his or her opinions. Being a teacher means having a certain authority, but the student should be able to confront that authority freely and critically. This is what we mean by liberal education—not that a teacher plumps for certain political programs, but that the teaching is done in a "liberal" (open, undogmatic) style.

I do not doubt that there are conservative and radical teachers who teach in this "liberal" spirit. When I was a student at City College in the late 1930s, I studied philosophy with a man who was either a member of the Communist Party or was "cheating it out of dues." Far from being the propagandist of the Party line, which Sidney Hook kept insisting was the necessary role of Communist teachers, this man was decent, humane, and tolerant. Freedom of thought prevailed in his classroom. He had, you might say, a "liberal" character, and perhaps his commitment to teaching as a vocation was stronger than his loyalty to the Party. Were such things not to happen now and then, universities would be intolerable.

If, then, a university proposes a few required courses so that ill-read students may at least glance at what they do not know, that isn't (necessarily) "elitist." Different teachers will approach the agreed-upon texts in different ways, and that is as it should be. If a leftist student gets "stuck" with a conservative teacher, or a conservative student with a leftist teacher, that's part of what education should be. The university is saying to its incoming students: "Here are some sources of wisdom and beauty that have survived the centuries. In time you may choose to abandon them, but first learn something about them."

Your list of classics includes only dead, white males, all tied in to notions and values of Western hegemony. Doesn't this narrow excessively the horizons of education?

All depends on how far forward you go to compose your list of classics. If you do not come closer to the present than the mid-eighteenth century, then of course there will not be many, or even any, women in your roster. If you go past the mid-eighteenth century to reach the present, it's not at all true that only "dead, white males" are to be included. For example—and this must hold for hundreds of other teachers also—I have taught and written about Jane Austen, Emily Brontë, Charlotte Brontë, Elizabeth Gaskell, George Eliot, Emily Dickinson, Edith Wharton, Katherine Anne Porter, Doris Lessing, and Flannery O'Connor. I could easily add a comparable list of black writers. Did this, in itself, make me a better teacher? I doubt it. Did it make me a better person? We still lack modes of evaluation subtle enough to say for sure.

The absence of women from the literature of earlier centuries is a result of historical inequities that have only partly been remedied in recent years. Virginia Woolf, in a brilliant passage in *A Room of One's Own*, approaches this problem by imagining Judith, Shakespeare's sister, perhaps equally gifted but prevented by the circumstances of her time from developing her gifts:

> Any woman born with a great gift in the sixteenth century would certainly have gone crazed, shot herself, or ended her days in some lonely cottage outside the village, half witch, half wizard, feared and mocked at. . . . A highly gifted girl who had tried to use her gift for poetry would have been so thwarted and hindered by other people, so tortured and pulled asunder by her own contrary instincts, that she must have lost her health and sanity. . . .

The history that Virginia Woolf describes cannot be revoked. If we look at the great works of literature and thought through the centuries until about the mid-eighteenth century, we have to recognize that indeed they have been overwhelmingly the achievements of men. The circumstances in which these achievements occurred may be excoriated. The achievements remain precious.

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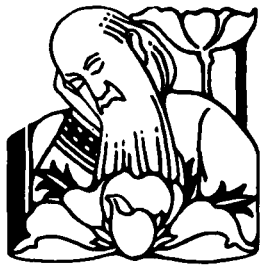

Faith and Intelligence:

Are They Compatible?

Among the well-educated the myth still circulates that religion is the preserve of the dim-witted, unlettered, and irrational. Yet recently *The New York Times Magazine* carried an article on the "return to religion" among intellectuals. From the Ivy League to Vanderbilt to Stanford, and among inquisitive people generally, there's an undeniable renewal of interest in the questions traditional religion raises and seeks to answer. This fascination is largely a result of the failures of secular substitutes for religion (such as positivism, hedonism, technological utopianism, egotism, Freudianism, and Marxism) to give abidingly satisfying answers to the truly significant puzzles in life: goodness, suffering, justice, love, death, and the meaning of it all.

The *Times* article discussed the NEW OXFORD REVIEW as part of this return to religion, and rightly so. We at the REVIEW are spearheading today's intellectual engagement with what Daniel Bell terms "the sacred." Among other things, we scrutinize the religious dimensions of the great events and issues of the past and present, and probe the wisdom offered not only by the Bible and Church fathers, but also by such diverse giants as St. Francis, Aquinas, Dante, Thomas More, Kierkegaard, Newman, Dostoyevsky, Chesterton, Bonhoeffer, Eliot, Silone, Maritain, Niebuhr, Solzhenitsyn, Dorothy Day, C.S. Lewis, Martin Luther King Jr., Flannery O'Connor, Simone Weil, Mother Teresa, Graham Greene, Malcolm Muggeridge, and Pope John Paul II.

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Those who write for us — Sheldon Vanauken, Robert N. Bellah, John Lukacs, Henri J.M. Nouwen, Avery Dulles, Robert Coles, Richard J. Mouw, Christopher Lasch, Eileen Egan, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Peter Kreeft, and others — express themselves with clarity, verve, style, and heart. We bat around a wide variety of issues and defy easy pigeonholing. We'll keep you on your toes.

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To isolate a group of texts as the canon is to establish a hierarchy of bias, in behalf of which there can be no certainty of judgment.

There is mischief or confusion in the frequent use of the term "hierarchy" by the academic insurgents, a conflation of social and intellectual uses. A social hierarchy may entail a (mal)distribution of income and power, open to the usual criticisms; a literary "hierarchy" signifies a judgment, often based on historical experience, that some works are of supreme or abiding value, while others are of lesser value, and still others quite without value. To prefer Elizabeth Bishop to Judith Krantz is not of the same order as sanctioning the inequality of wealth in the United States. To prefer Shakespeare to Sidney Sheldon is not of the same order as approving the hierarchy of the nomenklatura in Communist dictatorships.

As for the claim that there is no certainty of judgment, all tastes being historically molded or individually subjective, I simply do not believe that the people who make it live by it. This is an "egalitarianism" of valuation that people of even moderate literacy know to be false and unworkable—the making of judgments, even if provisional and historically modulated, is inescapable in the life of culture. And if we cannot make judgments or demonstrate the grounds for our preferences, then we have no business teaching literature—we might just as well be teaching advertising—and there is no reason to have departments of literature.

The claim that there can be value-free teaching is a liberal deception or self-deception; so too the claim that there can be texts untouched by social and political bias. Politics or ideology is everywhere, and it's the better part of honesty to admit this.

If you look hard (or foolishly) enough, you can find political and social traces everywhere. But to see politics or ideology in all texts is to scrutinize the riches of literature through a single lens. If you choose, you can read all or almost all literary works through the single lens of religion. But what a sad impoverishment of the imagination, and what a violation of our sense of reality, this represents. Politics may be "in" everything, but not everything is politics. A good social critic will know which texts are inviting to a given approach and which it would be wise to leave to others.

To see politics everywhere is to diminish the weight of politics. A serious politics recognizes the limits of its reach; it deals with public affairs while leaving alone large spheres of existence; it seeks not to "totalize" its range of interest. Some serious thinkers believe that the ultimate aim of politics should be to render itself superfluous. That may seem an unrealizable goal; meanwhile, a good part of the struggle for freedom in recent decades has been to draw a line beyond which politics must not tread. The same holds, more or less, for literary study and the teaching of literature.

Wittingly or not, the traditional literary and intellectual canon was based on received elitist ideologies, the values of Western imperialism, racism, sexism, etc., and the teaching of the humanities was marked by corresponding biases. It is now necessary to enlarge the canon so that voices from Africa, Asia, and Latin America can be heard. This is especially important for minority students so that they may learn about their origins and thereby gain in self-esteem.

It is true that over the decades some university teaching has reflected inherited social biases—how, for better or worse, could it not? Most often this was due to the fact that many teachers shared the common beliefs of American society. But not all teachers! As long as those with critical views were allowed to speak freely, the situation, if not ideal, was one that people holding minority opinions and devoted to democratic norms had to accept.

Yet the picture drawn by some academic insurgents—that most teachers, until quite recently, were in the grip of the worst values of Western society—is overdrawn. I can testify that some of my school and college teachers a few decades ago, far from upholding Western imperialism or white supremacy, were sharply critical of American society, in some instances from a boldly reformist outlook. They taught us to care about literature both for its own sake and because, as they felt, it often helped confirm their worldviews. (And to love it even if it didn't confirm their worldviews.) One high school teacher introduced me to Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* as a novel showing how cruel society can be to rebels, and up to a point, she was right. At college, as a fervent anti-Stalinist Marxist, I wrote a thoughtless "class analysis" of Edmund Spenser's poetry for an English class, and the kindly instructor, whose politics were probably not very far from mine, suggested that there were more things in the world, especially as Spenser had seen it, than I could yet recognize. I mention these instances to suggest that there has always been a range of opinion among teachers, and if anything, the American academy has tilted more to the left than most other segments of our society. There were of course right-wing professors too; I remember an economics teacher we called "Steamboat" Fulton, the object of amiable ridicule among the students who nonetheless learned something from him.

Proposals to enlarge the curriculum to include non-Western writings—if made in good faith and not in behalf of an ideological campaign—are in principle to be respected. A course in ancient thought might well include a selection from Confucius; a course in the modern novel might well include a work by Tanizaki or García Márquez.

There are practical difficulties. Due to the erosion of requirements in many universities, those courses that survive are usually no more than a year or a semester in duration, so that there is danger of a diffusion to the point of incoherence. Such courses, if they are to have any value, must focus primarily on the intellectual and cultural traditions of Western society. That, like it or not, is where we come from and that is where we are. All of us who live in America are, to some extent, Western: it gets to us in our deepest and also our most trivial habits of thought and speech, in our sense of right and wrong, in our idealism and our cynicism.

As for the argument that minority students will gain

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in self-esteem through being exposed to writings by Africans and black Americans, it is hard to know. Might not entering minority students, some of them ill-prepared, gain a stronger sense of self-esteem by mastering the arts of writing and reading than by being told, as some are these days, that Plato and Aristotle plagiarized from an African source? Might not some black students feel as strong a sense of self-esteem by reading, say, Dostoyevsky and Malraux (which Ralph Ellison speaks of having done at a susceptible age) as by being confined to black writers? Is there not some-.hing grossly patronizing in the notion that while diverse literary studies are appropriate for middle-class white students, something else, racially determined, is required for the minorities? Richard Wright found sustenance in Dreiser, Ralph Ellison in Hemingway, Chinua Achebe in Eliot, Leopold Senghor in the whole of French poetry. Are there not unknown young Wrights and Ellisons, Achebes and Senghors in our universities who might also want to find their way to an individually achieved sense of culture?

VIRGINIA WOOLF BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

In any case, is the main function of the humanities directly to inculcate self-esteem? Do we really know how this can be done? And if done by bounding the curriculum according to racial criteria, may that not perpetuate the very grounds for a lack of self-esteem? I do not know the answers to these questions, but do the advocates of multiculturalism?

One serious objection to "multicultural studies" remains: that it tends to segregate students into categories fixed by birth, upbringing, and obvious environment. Had my teachers tried to lead me toward certain writers because they were Jewish, I would have balked—I wanted to find my own way to Proust, Kafka, and Pirandello, writers who didn't need any racial credentials. Perhaps things are different with students today—we ought not to be dogmatic about these matters. But are there not shared norms of pride and independence among young people, whatever their race and color?

The jazz musician Wynton Marsalis testifies: "Everybody has two heritages, ethnic and human. The human aspects give art its real enduring power. . . . The racial aspect, that's a crutch so you don't have to go out into the world." David Bromwich raises an allied question: Should we wish "to legitimize the belief that the mind of a student deserves to survive in exactly the degree that it corresponds with one of the classes of socially constructed group minds? If I were a student today I would find this assumption frightening. It is, in truth, more than a license for conformity. It is a four-year sentence to conformity."

What you have been saying is pretty much the same as what conservatives say. Doesn't that make you feel uncomfortable?

No, it doesn't. There are conservatives—and conservatives. Some, like the editor of *The New Criterion*, are frantic ideologues with their own version of p.c., the classics as safeguard for the status quo. This is no more attractive than the current campus ideologizing. But there are also conservatives who make the necessary discriminations between using culture, as many have tried to use religion, as a kind of social therapy and seeing culture as a realm with its own values and rewards.

Similar differences hold with regard to the teaching of past thinkers. In a great figure like Edmund Burke you will find not only the persuasions of conservatism but also a critical spirit that does not readily lend itself to ideological coarseness. Even those of us who disagree with him fundamentally can learn from Burke the disciplines of argument and resources of language.

Let us suppose that in University X undergoing a curriculum debate there is rough agreement about which books to teach between professors of the democratic left and their conservative colleagues. Why should that trouble us—or them? We agree on a given matter, perhaps for different reasons. Or there may be a more or less shared belief in the idea of a liberal education. If there is, so much the better. If the agreement is momentary, the differences will emerge soon enough.

A Little Epilogue

A NEW REPUBLIC reader: "Good lord, you're becoming a virtuoso at pushing through open doors. All this carrying on just to convince us that students should read great books. It's so obvious . . ."

I reply: "Dear reader, you couldn't be more right. But that is where we are." ●

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Gluttons for Punishment

The world can't get enough of fear. As if the newspapers and the TV news and the very streets themselves weren't sufficiently filled with the fearsome, books and films manufactured only to frighten us thrive bountifully. Merely mentioning our most popular novelist, Stephen King, or a film series like *Nightmare on Elm Street* makes us realize that the world is hooked on masochism. Of course, some sadism is intermingled—we do the killing as well as the dying—but masochism predominates. Tom Clancy's forthcoming novel is called *The Sum of All Fears,* and it's a Book-of-the-Month Club main selection. There's no shortage of supply in the fear market.

Certainly scare stories have been with us for ages. What else is "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"? Spook films and, once upon a time, spook plays were always common. (*The Ghost Train* was a big favorite with British and American stock companies.) But all the scare stuff of the past took place within the reader-viewer's context of relative security. We made tingly expeditions and returned to safety. Is there anything like a similar return these days? Scare books and films now seem a means to extend, to intensify, the tensions of everyday.

I wonder how a viewer of, say, 1930 would have reacted to **The Silence of the Lambs** (Orion). 1930 was not exactly an Edenic year, but very many of today's fears and tensions, local and global, were minuscule then. (Small example: it was not remotely foolhardy then to go for a midnight walk in empty New York streets.) This new film by Jonathan Demme would have been frightening then, surely, but probably it would have seemed like a descent into a netherworld. Now it seems more like a confirmation of the world around us.

The screenplay by Ted Tally, taken from a novel by Thomas Harris (unread by me), is about a female FBI trainee and her assignment to question a man incarcerated for eight years in a prison for the criminally insane. He is a cannibalistic killer—he ate parts of his victims. He is also a highly intelligent, suave, learned psychiatrist. He is extremely dangerous, kept in isolation behind bars that also have a layer of plexiglass across them.

The trainee's visit is connected with the current depredations of a serial killer nicknamed Buffalo Bill, who murders and skins his victims, all female. The FBI chief thinks that the cannibal may be able to provide clues about the skinner and that a woman may more easily get that information.

The title comes from a childhood memory of hers that the psychiatrist prisoner cleverly elicits. She was living on a western ranch when she was 10 and was awakened by the screaming of lambs about to be slaughtered. She tried, unsuccessfully, to save at least one. Now, almost unconsciously, she has gone into this work to help keep other lambs, human ones, from screaming.

Obviously from the start, the cannibal is going somehow to escape from captivity. Obviously, too, there is going to be some kind of ultimate showdown between the trainee and one or both of the killers. Like almost all such screenplays, *Lambs* begins veristically, trim and hard; then, as the action heats up, the incredible begins to seep in, to keep things heated. The weakest elements in the film are first, the linkage between the two killers; and second, the trainee's "big situation" at the end. She goes forward single-handed—stupidly and unbelievably—into a terribly dangerous situation when she could easily have taken time to withdraw and call for help. The way the danger is resolved, in the dark, is past belief.

The word "melodrama" gets refurbished in *Lambs.* Melos is laid on heavily to support, even to create, the drama. Howard Shore's thickly ominous score is used right from the start to imply suspense even where none exists. In the opening sequence the trainee is running through woods while the music mutters and growls so darkly that we expect someone to jump out and grab her. After a minute or so, we see that she is only on an obstacle course, going through an exercise.

This was a dubious decision by Demme because it weakens the threat of the music in the truly drastic situations. However, Demme's pacing is tight throughout, marred only by some low-angle close-ups of the cannibal that are right out of old Vincent Price thrillers. Tak Fujimoto's lighting helps a great deal, particularly the startlingly simple

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Awakenings. *Despite some Hollywood touches, this adaptation of Oliver Sacks's book has conviction. Robert De Niro as a post-encephalitic is all right. Ruth Nelson as his mother, Robin Williams as the concerned doctor, are better. (Reviewed 1/7&14/91)* **The End of Innocence.** *Dyan Cannon wrote and directed and stars. Trite material—a woman is driven over the edge by emotional abuse and recovers through therapy—but Cannon's acting and directing are extraordinary. (2/11/91)* **The Godfather: Part III.** *Exactly what it says*—The Godfather: Part III. *This time the plot involves the murder of a pope. Otherwise, for good and less good, it's like its predecessors. (1/21/91)* **Hidden Agenda.** *An adequately made thriller about the troubles in Northern Ireland. Brian Cox sturdy as an English detective investigating (apparent) IRA murders. Curious omission: no mention of the Unionist majority of the population. (2/4/91)* **—SK**

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way he makes the cannibal's cell seem a spot on another planet, a fit abode for this smarmy beast.

Anthony Hopkins plays him perfectly. My knowledge of cannibalistic killers is slight, but Hopkins conveys the sense of a man whose mind understands his mania and has accommodated it—eerily—to its own intellectual spectrum. Most of the other performances are adequate. Exception: Anthony Heald as the head of the prison. It's the one poorly written role of the lot—the man behaves ridiculously on TV—but Heald does little to compensate.

Another exception: Jodie Foster as the trainee. I have to enter a dissent about her work in general. She got rave reviews, and an Oscar, for her performance as a rape victim in *The Accused*, but it seemed to me relatively facile, broad acting, in which a woman was not created as much as collected from off-the-shelf choices—accessible to dozens of modestly talented people. Foster was luckier to get the part than she was subtle or original in playing it.

Here again, in *Lambs*, the role itself does the acting for her, so to speak. Her spare, peck-mouthed face is not a highly expressive actor's mask. Her acting choices, from moment to moment, always seem to come from an available stock. I kept thinking of what Rebecca de Mornay could have done to freshen the role—thought of de Mornay because in 1988 she played an FBI trainee in a piece of tripe called *Feds*. (Careers and Oscars and all that are sometimes as much a matter of luck as talent.) De Mornay has the almost scary power of concentration that a good actor must begin with; Foster seems to have not much more than industrious application. She fills in the spaces allotted to her by the script, but she never provides more than the expected.

Nonetheless, those who need an extra dose of fear these days will doubtless get it from this film.

Heaven and Earth (Triton) is Japanese, with some voice-overs in English, and is about sixteenth-century warlords and their bloody struggles. The exterior scenes, very vast, were shot in Canada. We're told that 2,800 extras on foot and 800 riders were used. They can all be seen, and numerically the picture is impressive. But in no other way. It's all muddled Kurosawa (only one facet of that master). One of the leading actors even looks like Toshiro Mifune. The editing is flabby, the characterizations nonexistent, the story unclear, and the finish omitted. The English-speaking narrator simply tells us, after a while, about what happened subsequently, as if the director and the budget had suddenly got tired.

The director is Haruki Kadokawa, who, we're told, is also a Shinto priest, an author, the president of a large publishing company, and a co-producer of Broadway shows. He directed three films prior to *Heaven and Earth*. Next year he plans to "captain an exact replica of Columbus's flagship, the *Santa Maria*, on an eight-month 17,000-mile voyage from Spain to Japan." Let's hope that next year's replica is more successful than this one. ●

Robert Brustein on Theater

As the Globe Turns

Subterranean tensions have traditionally existed between the arts community of Boston and the city's newspaper of record, *The Boston Globe*, regarding the paper's arts coverage and the competence of its reviewers. Following the appointment of Lincoln Millstein as Living Arts editor in January 1989, these tensions erupted into open warfare. The latest salvo was a missile attack—thirteen articles and an editorial, occupying three days and more than a hundred columns of newsprint, about the failings of Boston's museums, theaters, galleries, opera and dance companies, and musical organizations. "The Fine Arts: A World Without Color" said nothing about the quality of non-profit institutions. The series' purpose was to charge them with "elitism," "exclusionism," and a lack of "multicultural diversity."

I report this both as a witness of the *Globe*'s disciplining of the arts and as one of the alleged miscreants. Not only was the American Repertory Theatre, where I am artistic director, among the many organizations chastened for failing to provide sufficient outlets for minority expression or employment opportunities for "people of color," but I was personally paddled last spring by *Globe* critics Kev-

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in Kelly and Patti Hartigan, in two long, vituperative articles, for criticizing August Wilson's *The Piano Lesson* and the way it was brought to Broadway.

Recognizing that I am one of the players in this controversy, readers may choose to discount what follows as special pleading. The *Globe*, in fact, has already charged me with conflict of interest—not to mention envy, revenge, hypocrisy, prejudice, and paranoia—because I was the founding director of the Yale Repertory Theatre, the institution that originated *The Piano Lesson*. It is possible, too, that the flap may strike you as a parochial matter, of marginal interest to those living outside Boston. Still, the underlying issues seem to me sufficiently typical of the way that social and political pressures are choking artistic endeavor—and the way that a powerful newspaper can abuse its cultural influence—to warrant wider discussion, even from what might be construed as a subjective source.

Actually, the *Globe*'s hostile treatment of the arts had already come to wide attention last summer when Fox Butterfield, Boston bureau representative for *The New York Times*, wrote an article about the theft of paintings from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. In the course of his report, he mentioned that the Gardner's new executive director, Anne Hawley (former head of the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities), had been threatened with retaliation by the *Globe*'s Living Arts editor when she didn't open a room, sealed by the FBI, to his reporter. "You can tell Anne Hawley for me," Millstein allegedly said to a museum aide, who relayed the conversation to *The Boston Phoenix*, "that she fucked up at the arts council and she's fucking up at the Gardner. I'm going to get her. I'm going to rip her to shreds." (Millstein denied the remark, but regretted using "bad language.") Soon after, the *Globe* published a long, damaging article on the Gardner charging Hawley, among other derelictions, with permitting the collection to deteriorate, though she had been at the museum for only a few months.

When *The Village Voice* and *The Boston Phoenix* decided to pursue the story, both papers received unidentified calls saying that Butterfield was bitter because his wife, a respected *Los Angeles Times* reporter, had been turned down for a job at the *Globe*. (In fact the approach came from the *Globe*, which couldn't match her salary.) The whispers were published: the *Globe*'s celebrated method of defaming the messenger discouraged Butterfield from writing a projected follow-up piece. The issue lay dormant until Maureen Dezell wrote a longer story in the *Phoenix* detailing the resentments of Boston's arts leaders toward the *Globe*. Fearful of retaliation, most refused to speak for the record.

Being another recently defamed messenger, I also refused. But I did send a letter to Max Frankel at the *Times* saluting Butterfield's courage, attesting to his accuracy, and mentioning an article I had written in 1986, at the *Globe*'s behest. Then a relative newcomer to the city and still untouched myself, I spoke in it of the malice that I detected on the part of the newspaper toward virtually all of Boston's arts leaders (local expatriate hero Peter Sellars excluded): Seiji Ozawa of the Boston Symphony, Sarah Caldwell of the Opera Company, Bruce Marks of the Boston Ballet, David Ross of the Institute for Contemporary Arts, Anne Hawley as head of the Mass. Council, and later Christopher Hogwood of the Handel and Haydn Society.

Millstein called our press office, saying he knew of this letter and wondering if the ART was dissatisfied with our coverage, or with him. I had met him only once, when he first took over his position, to retail the litany of complaints that I, along with other arts people, had long been reciting to editors at the *Globe*. He seemed congenial enough at the time, and his colleagues attest to his loyalty and friendship. But he has no background in the arts ("I'm a journalist," he says), and he shows little interest in culture other than movies and rock music. (The *Globe*'s Sunday section, called "Arts, Etc.," is mostly just "Etc.") In an address to a group of arts representatives, he told them that his primary function was "to sell newspapers" (Millstein previously served on the *Globe* as business editor). Still, his editorship has not been used purely to promote circulation: he also has a generally recognized instinct for retaliatory strikes, which was thoroughly documented in Dezell's article. "One by one, he's attacked the arts leadership of Boston," said Larry Murray, chairman of the Midtown Cultural District Task Force, which had also suffered indignity at the hands of the *Globe*. "Millstein can't wait to write the obituary for the arts in this city."

Another figure willing to speak for the record is David Ross, recently appointed director of the Whitney Museum in New York after serving eight years as head of the ICA. Reported in the *Globe* as leaving Boston because he couldn't find enough "cultural diversity" here, he offered reasons in a recent *Phoenix* interview that sound a little more plausible:

> The *Globe* is an unacknowledged co-conspirator in the malaise of Boston's cultural institutions. . . . It's not taking a role as an educator or to provoke people to participate in Boston's cultural community. . . . At the *Globe*, there's a know-nothing attitude, an anti-intellectual bias—an attitude of ingrown hostility toward the arts. In the arts community, there's a sense that the *Globe* is our adversary.

Or as a national foundation head recently put it, "The only trouble with the arts in Boston is *The Boston Globe*."

Given Millstein's provocative nature—and the fact that, despite his Jewish name, he's Asian American—many now suspect that the recent series on the lack of "diversity" in Boston's cultural institutions was an effort to combine genuine minority concerns (he told me that it was motivated by the flap over the casting of *Miss Saigon*) with some swipes at those who had been criticizing the *Globe*'s arts coverage. For this multiple purpose, he assigned Patti Hartigan, a reporter who had previously written articles criticizing Boston theaters for failing to hire enough local actors or minorities or women—assisted by Diane E. Lewis, one of the few blacks on the staff of the newspaper.

Based on innumerable interviews with Boston's arts leaders, the investigation was essentially a statistical breakdown of the companies, staffs, audiences, and boards of all the major cultural institutions, tallying their records for employing "people of color" (the *Globe*'s preferred euphemism for anyone not pink). Hartigan's conclusion was that all of these institutions, with the single exception of the Children's Museum (a "beacon of light"), were "dominated by middle-class and wealthy whites, with little representation from racial groups that are expected to make up more than 40 percent of the Boston population by the year 2000 and to exceed the white population two or three decades later."

The ART was the only local institution, under my instructions, that refused to supply her with statistics. This she mentioned more than once in the course of the articles, along with the fact that I, alone among Boston arts figures, had refused to be interviewed by her. This spared me the ignominy of wearing a hair shirt in public; I was rewarded instead with a scarlet letter. Though she had been told the reasons, off the record, in her interview with ART's managing director, Robert J. Orchard, both omissions were made to sound racist. Actually, I had determined not to talk to any reporter at the *Globe* who had already misrepresented my views, and I wanted to protect my colleagues from racial in-

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quisitions. Traditional ACLU liberals were taught not to respond to inquiries into the racial, religious, political, or sexual background and preferences of people with whom they worked, because these inquiries might be used for malevolent discriminatory purposes. Now, in the context of contemporary "political correctness," such inquiries were being used for more benign purposes of reverse discrimination—but, considering the pendulum swings of history, who could tell what the future would bring?

As it happens, the ART is as well provided with minority company contracts onstage this year as any cultural institution in the city (perhaps in fact better)—but statistics cannot tell the whole story. Numbers change from season to season, partly influenced by production needs, partly by the willingness of skilled minority actors (who are much sought after) to join a resident company—or move to a racially tense city—at salaries considerably lower than they can make in movies or television. But to play this numbers game is to distract attention from the primary purpose of cultural institutions, which is to create works of art with high standards. This is not always identical with satisfying the requirements of social engineering. Seiji Ozawa properly identified racial discrimination as the biggest problem in America, but added that he wasn't hired as conductor of the BSO to resolve it. It was his job to make music. Challenged over whom he would choose between two musicians of equal quality—one black, one white—he replied: "The better one."

Although Boston is considered a racist city, no one I know in the liberal-minded Boston arts scene is indifferent to the pressing needs of minorities or less than outraged by the social inequities of the system. Still, there is a difference between equality of opportunity and equality of representation. It is no longer accurate to say that "blacks have to be better than their competition"; skilled black artists are now at a premium. And so the *Globe*'s attempt to equate the comparatively low number of minorities in high culture in 1991 with the way the great contralto Marian Anderson was prevented from singing in Washington in 1939 is historically specious. The doors of culture are open to everyone who is qualified to enter them, as artists or as spectators. Yet the *Globe* invariably detects evidence of discrimination, blaming, say, the absence of black faces at the Museum of Fine Arts on the fact that everything there is white, from the marble on the floor to the staff, to the sculptures, to the paintings on the wall.

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The *Globe* was particularly hard on the Museum of Fine Arts, an easy mark as a Brahmin stronghold, for reflecting what the series called "the values and Eurocentric art traditions of the city's elite." Racism was also detected in the very origins of dance, as practiced by the Boston Ballet, in the very traditions of classical music, as performed by the Boston Symphony. "There is almost no overlap," the *Globe* complained with astonishment, "between the audiences at mainstream organizations and the audiences at community centers." And while it stopped just short of asking the Handel and Haydn Society to stop playing eighteenth-century music, it did say that "the all-white composition of the audiences . . . is a visual declaration of the increasing chasm." (For all the talk of accessibility, the *Globe* approvingly cited August Wilson and Lloyd Richards for rejecting the idea of inclusion in Western art as an affront to the separate integrity of black culture.)

Not only was the whole Western cultural tradition considered a source of discrimination, but the *Globe*'s series even went on to impute racist motives to the fact that the museum has been forced, for financial reasons, to close its Huntington Avenue entrance ("What does that say to the urban population?") and to change its free hours from Saturday morning to Wednesday afternoon, while criticizing the failure of all Boston's cultural institutions to attract and support minorities in their training programs, or to subsidize underprivileged audiences.

These remarks suggest a kind of willed naïveté about the financial condition of the non-profit world in the present day, particularly in Boston. Despite the city's reputation as the Athens of America, Boston has one of the worst records in the country for support of the arts, not only from the financial community but also from the media. (Even well-endowed dinosaurs such as the MFA and the BSO are hurting.) The city ranks fiftieth among urban areas in corporate giving; the BSO is the only symphony in the nation that doesn't receive city money, and the MFA is the only major museum not sitting on city land. Virtually no community foundations support the arts, and the Mass. Council has lost most of its funding through legislative action.

All but the largest cultural institutions in Boston are at the poverty level, which suggests why the *Globe*'s proposal for more minority representation in the arts is fiscally disingenuous. Even if the money were available for additional staffing, outreach programs, and "multicultural" expression, affirmative action of the kind the *Globe* proposes would have little immediate impact on minority advancement in the arts. Twenty-three percent of Boston's population is black, but only a very small percentage is middle class; and class, not race, drives the appetite for high culture. As Shelby Steele observes in *The Content of Our Character*, having noted a 74 percent dropout rate among black university students, there will be no advantage to entitlements, preferences, and other sops to self-esteem if the society does not help blacks and other minorities develop the skills to enjoy them.

That is the task of families, the schools, and the media, all of which are failing in the crucial area of educating taste and developing appreciation for our arts (which, as Edward Rothstein notes, are deeply appreciated in Asia). It is certainly a failure of the *Globe*, which refuses to see a difference between high culture and popular culture, between the imperatives of the imagination and the need for prestige, between adding minority harpists to the Symphony and sniping at the "Eurocentric" classical repertory, between racial assimilation and self-segregation, between artistic homes and "multicultural" civic centers—or between an organization devoted to creating art and a community-driven museum for children.

On governing boards, the proposed changes would be cosmetic. Though they also serve as bridges to the community, boards are formed not on the basis of racial or ethnic diversity but according to who is supportive enough to help raise money for needy institutions. As for staffs and companies, the situation can and must be improved. The task is to find, or to train, qualified members of minorities, and to find the means to afford them. (Harvard is wooing a black professor who reputedly makes an annual salary of more than $250,000 at another university.)

The problem is not that Western culture is closed to diversity, but that it has been too intimidated to insist on standards. To do otherwise is condescending and patronizing. What Steele writes about universities is true of cultural institutions: they can never be "free of guilt until they truly help black students, which means leading and challenging them rather than negotiating and capitulating." The courage with which this idea is expressed almost restores one's faith in independent thought.

The *Globe*'s Kulturkampf against "elitism" may be a sincere ideological posture. But it fits in snugly with Millstein's declared mandate to increase circulation. Now that the Murdoch-owned *Boston Herald* is drawing away advertisers and subscribers, the *Globe* has apparently decided to use Brahmin-bashing to attract a tabloid readership without losing its reputation as a liberal journal. The paper (according to one of its jaundiced editors) has always been interested exclusively in "the indoor sport of politics and the outdoor sport of baseball"; the arts are a source of mystification and indifference to the higher echelon. This may account for the inferior quality of the *Globe*'s reviewers (the exception is Jay Carr in movies, though Richard Dyer in music, while guilty of glaring prejudices, is at least literate). Long-ensconced and occupying well-fortified fiefdoms, unaccountable and impervious to the almost universal complaints of the cultural community, these reviewers add daily artillery to the unequal war between the city's culture and the city's paper of record.

The conduct of the *Globe* toward the arts is not merely an instance of how an organ of the news can help to debase standards, lower morale, and ignore achievement. It is not only a story about how one idiosyncratic editor can use his power for purposes of intimidation: the storm was brewing before the arrival of Millstein, and will no doubt continue to rage after his rumored departure. It is, rather, a significant symptom of a germ that has begun to infest the mind of our entire country. The philistinism of the *Globe* is now taking a political form, reflected in a number of our institutions. It is influencing our art, our education, our very notions of progress. It is responsible for the perpetuation of unexamined ideas, thoughtless prescriptions, sentimental solutions.

Martin Luther King used to say that he was less interested in the future of black people than in the future of America; it was just that America's future was intimately bound up with the resolution of the black problem. This majestic, unifying idea could never be uttered today, when we have broken into dozens of isolated constituencies, each arguing for moral, social, and aesthetic supremacy. After King's death, the escalating protests on behalf of peace and civil rights turned to violence, separatism, and powerful assaults on intellectual authority itself. Yet one could still believe, for all the youthful hysteria in the university, that the adult liberal centers were keeping their reason. Now that confidence is dwindling. The radicals who once occupied university buildings are inside the walls as members of the tenured professoriat, blocking dissent and political deviation, controlling hiring, monitoring

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the curriculum. They are also sitting at the heads of foundations, in the agencies of government—and in the newsrooms of powerful newspapers.

The intellectual atmosphere is filled with stifling vapors, and the gas is not just being expelled by Jesse Helms. The National Endowment for the Arts is beginning to penalize those grantees that cannot justify themselves on the basis of minority representation, and most of the private foundations are focusing on "multicultural" programs and audience development. (The Boston Foundation, which has not offered a penny to the arts in almost a decade, has at last decided to contribute money—to projects displaying "cultural diversity.") This political agenda is being enforced, of course, on behalf of minorities, but there is one minority that's been excluded—the artist, who works on behalf of the imagination, unmindful of color, regardless of race, unused to being told precisely what and how to create. It is unlikely that this superficial approach to racial reconciliation will resolve our social conflicts or advance our minorities. There is no doubt, however, that it will block the flow of free expression in the arts. ●

Destiny Is Anatomy

BY KATHARINE PARK AND ROBERT A. NYE

Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud by Thomas Laqueur

(Harvard University Press, 313 pp., $27.95)

In 1573 Ambroise Paré, surgeon to the king of France, recorded the strange case of a man called Germain Garnier, whom he had observed when the royal entourage passed through the town of Vitry le François. Until the age of 15, Germain, who had been baptized Marie, had lived and dressed as a girl. While chasing pigs one day, she leaped over a ditch, whereupon the ligaments that held her genitals within her snapped, according to Paré, allowing a male penis to appear, and sending her home to her mother in tears. After a committee of local doctors and surgeons pronounced her a man, she took a new name, and eventually grew a red beard.

Paré explained her astonishing metamorphosis in these terms: "The reason women can change into men is because they have hidden inside their bodies that which men carry outside, and they lack only the heat necessary to push out the genitals kept bound within by the coldness of their temperament." By running with her pigs, Marie had elevated her internal heat enough to correct this defect. The reverse transformation, however, could never occur, since "nature always tends toward perfection and does not, on the contrary, act such that the perfect becomes imperfect."

Such an explanation, argues Thomas Laqueur in this provocative new book, would be impossible today. We stand on the other side of a great chasm, a continental divide in thinking about sex, that separates us from Paré and his predecessors. "Sometime in the eighteenth century," as he puts it, "sex as we know it was invented." Before then, people (by which he means primarily medical writers) acknowledged the existence of only one sex, the male one. Men and women were seen as arranged along a vertical spectrum, corresponding to their degree of vital heat and metaphysical perfection. Their cultural and social world recognized the traditional two genders, but this distinction was insecure and ungrounded, with no basis in contemporary medicine or biology. Physiologically speaking, woman was not the "opposite" sex, but only a degenerate form of man; and her reproductive organs were an inverted version of the male genitals, trapped within her body as Paré described.

It was only after about 1750, Laqueur maintains, that this "one-sex model" gave way to a "two-sex model" based on the idea of a radical dimorphism between men and women. Woman was no longer seen as a "lesser version of man along a vertical axis of infinite gradations, but rather as an altogether different creature along a horizontal axis whose middle ground was largely empty." A primary index of this shift, according to Laqueur, was the disappearance of the female orgasm, which earlier writers considered necessary for procreation. In the years after 1750, this view began to lose its hold. By the mid-nineteenth century, the female orgasm had been ban-

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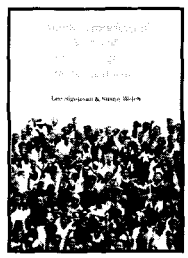

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ished by doctors to the "borderlands of physiology," creating, as if by default, a sexually anesthetized woman—the passionless and respectable housewife—in place of the lusty goodwife of the Renaissance.

Laqueur's book is an ambitious attempt to demonstrate this transformation by examining medical writing over the two-and-a-half millennia between Aristotle and Freud. He uses a wide array of texts and images to reveal how representations of sex and the body, however mutable, are always infused and informed by contemporary assumptions about the proper relations between men and women. The representations thus serve as metaphors for the inequitable social and political order they mean to justify. He offers powerful proof that woman's nature is always culturally "produced" in the absence of decisive scientific facts, and even, occasionally, in the teeth of evidence to the contrary. "Serious talk about sexuality," as he puts it, "is thus inevitably about the social order it both represents and legitimates." That order, like our ideas about sex, has so far been dominated by men. Thus a penis is a penis, but it is also a status symbol, marking its possessor as a member of the group whose physical and metaphysical attributes render them—by their own account—the proper custodians of knowledge and power.

Laqueur's arguments for this larger point are passionate and eloquent, and his evidence is massive and convincing. He is filling in the broad outlines of the interpretation sketched by Foucault in his groundbreaking *History of Sexuality*, and drawing on feminist theory and historiography as elaborated in the work of Joan Scott, Sander Gilman, and Londa Schiebinger. With them, he is helping to transform the field, we would hope permanently: once an anemic and self-congratulatory narrative of scientific discoveries concerning reproductive anatomy and physiology, the history of sexuality is finally being integrated into cultural history as a whole.

But what of Laqueur's specific arguments concerning the one-sex body and the two-sex body and the eighteenth-century shift between them? Here, unfortunately, the evidence is much less convincing. The closer one looks at his chronology, and at the texts and the images that he adduces, the more his distinction between the two models blurs into a haze of contradictions. These problems are most pronounced in the first half of his book, which deals with the period up to the Enlightenment. Here a more complete reading of the sources shows that there never was a one-sex model in Laqueur's sense—not in Aristotle, not in Galen, not in Paré—although sexual difference was defined somewhat differently than in the nineteenth century. But even Laqueur's account of the later period has serious flaws. Bent on proving his own thesis, often to the extent of seriously distorting the evidence, he undervalues many of the continuities that link the age of Freud with the Renaissance.

For a start, he consistently imposes a false homogeneity on his sources, especially for the long and varied period before 1750. There is, in truth, no single early Western model of sex and sexual difference. Laqueur's "one-sex model" is a hybrid of individual and sometimes mutually contradictory features assembled from the two dominant and fundamentally incompatible traditions of early writing on the subject, the Aristotelian and the Hippocratic/Galenic. From Aristotle, Laqueur takes the notion of woman as an imperfect man, characterized by a lower degree of vital (or more properly, complexional) heat. From Galen, he takes the ideas that female genitals are inverted versions of the male, and that orgasm is indispensable for a woman to emit her seed and thus to conceive. But he downplays a countervailing Aristotelian thesis, which is that the female contributes no seed and therefore requires no orgasm.

Aristotle, in fact, together with the Aristotelian theorists who dominated European thinking on sexuality between 1250 and 1550, expounded a two-sex model more sharply delineated in many respects than any modern theory. For these writers, women's sexual function was in no way parallel to men's. Women were essentially incubators; they provided a place for the fetus to develop and the matter to nourish it, while male semen contributed the formal principle, or soul. Thus women could become pregnant without orgasm and without knowledge. As Danielle Jacquart and Claude Thomasset have put it (in *Sexuality and Medicine in the Middle Ages*, the best single antidote to Laqueur's reading of the early period), woman "is thus the perfect antithesis of the male, who acts on this unconscious mechanism in a responsible and conscious way."

Laqueur's textual and pictorial evidence concerning the supposed identity of the male and female genitals is fascinating, but it, too, is ultimately unconvincing. His use of the early sixteenth-century anatomist Berengario da Carpi is typical of the kinds of partial readings on which his interpretation is based. Citing Berengario's own words that "the vagina is *like* the penis and the womb with testicles and vessels is *like* the scrotum" (our emphasis), Laqueur glosses them to mean that "the vagina really is a penis, and the uterus is a scrotum"—a conclusion that would certainly have puzzled Berengario and his contemporaries. Similarly, Laqueur claims repeatedly that before the eighteenth century the female reproductive organs were referred to only by the names of their male analogues, yet he himself refers to a passage in which Berengario calls the foreskin by the standard Latin word for the female labia, and he reproduces a woodcut from Berengario's anatomy that identifies the scrotum as an "inverted womb."

The argument that it was only in the eighteenth century that medical theorists began to conceive of a two-sex model is simply false. Later writers did indeed conceive of men and women as bimodally distributed along an axis of sexual difference, but so did medical theorists from the Greeks to the Renaissance—though Laqueur is right to emphasize the language of perfection and the vertical character of the axis in that period. With respect to the "middle ground" of the spectrum, there was some disagreement. Asserting the incommensurability of male and female, Aristotelians tended to claim that it was necessarily and absolutely empty; perfect hermaphrodism was impossible, and sex changes like Germain Garnier's were only apparent. Anti-Aristotelians such as Paré, writing in the full flush of the French Hippocratic revival of the mid-sixteenth century, held that such cases were theoretically possible, if extremely rare. We can find more typical contemporary reactions, even in France, among the (fictional) interlocutors of Guillaume Bouchet's *Serées* (1584), who greeted the story of Germain Garnier with great skepticism, and the (real) participants in the meeting of the Parisian Bureau d'Adresse in 1636, one of whom denied any possibility of a perfect hermaphrodite with the following words: "Because the internal and fundamental principal . . . of man is opposed to that of woman, because one consists in activity and the other in passivity, one in giving and the other in receiving, they can never coexist in the same individual."

The problem is that Laqueur seems unwilling to accept that the metaphysical categories and distinctions of classical and Renaissance writers were just as real to them as our more material ones are to us. He insists on collapsing their rich world of analogies into notions of identity, in keeping with our modern outlook. Many early medical theorists, like the poets and the philosophers of their time, saw the moral and physical universe as a

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dense web of correspondences linking not only the male and female genitals, but also the realms of animal, vegetable, and mineral. Each statement of analogy contained within it a dynamic tension, a simultaneous affirmation of similarity and (just as important) of difference. While the similarities lent unity to the universe, the differences assured its variety and acted as signs of God's infinite creativity. Any reading that emphasizes only the similarities in this cosmos, let alone reduces them to identities, misrepresents the entire structure.

Laqueur's myopia is ironic: he proposes a sophisticated critique of nineteenth-century biologism, but he cannot acknowledge as real any early medical concept of sexual difference not exclusively grounded in anatomy and the material world. He knows that medieval and Renaissance natural philosophers regarded the differences between the sexes in the first instance as metaphysical—perfect vs. imperfect, formal vs. material, active vs. passive—but he fails to see that such metaphysical distinctions had an ontological status for them that gave rise to palpable physical differences. He can accept these metaphysical differences only as "sociological," "rhetorical," or "political" projections, and so he can make sense of them only by assimilating them to the modern concept of gender. Thus he maintains that Renaissance writers recognized "at least two genders" (a sociological category), but only one sex (an anatomical one). This distinction may make sense to us, but it would have been incomprehensible to premodern philosophers and doctors.

The same totalizing impulse bedevils Laqueur's account of European thinking about sexuality after 1750, when, he argues, "sex" began to divide male from female in the way that "gender" did before. This era of liberal revolution ironically accompanied a revolution in medical thinking that deprived women of both their political rights and their orgasms, relegating them even more definitively than before to the private and domestic sphere of family and children.

Here Laqueur offers powerful evidence that woman's nature continued to be culturally produced, even against the grain of evidence. In the late eighteenth century, medical writers focused increasingly on the "economy" of female reproductive processes, allowing middle-class doctors to conclude that women's delicate child-bearing function had to be shielded from the hurly-burly of work and public life. By the 1840s they had renamed the ovaries (female testes, in the old medicine) and decided, many decades before their role in hormonal regulation was even suspected, that they were somehow what made a woman a woman. They used this "knowledge" to justify the widespread practice of ovariotomies, which were intended to treat hysteria or inappropriate sexual behavior.

In Laqueur's view, however, the most egregious casualty of this new way of thinking was the female orgasm, banished in order to undergird the concept of woman as "angel in the house." He shows convincingly that many nineteenth-century doctors, although they knew as little about ovulation as their Renaissance counterparts, nonetheless concluded, with much tortured reasoning, that women could have the requisite fertilizing orgasm without feeling it at all.

On this point, however, as in many of his other assertions, Laqueur's claims are open to dispute, as he himself occasionally notes. Carl Degler, Peter Gay, and others have pointed to the many memoirs and letters testifying to the orgasmic capacities of nineteenth-century women and the considerable body of medical opinion that acknowledged it. If one part of the medical profession was eager to anesthetize women, a host of sexual advice manuals advocated the delights of connubial bliss, and warned how easily physical love might founder on the shoals of male indifference or brutality.

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Alan Wolfe is the Michael E. Gellert Professor of Sociology and Political Science and Dean of The Graduate Faculty.

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Nineteenth-century embryologists, moreover, perpetuated the old Galenic notion of genital homologies by demonstrating that male and female genitalia developed out of the same anatomical structure, while other researchers rejected late eighteenth-century convictions about the universality of sexual reproduction, calling attention to budding, hermaphrodism, and other forms of reproductive parthenogenesis. In the same way, Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire's highly influential *Treatise on Teratology* (1832-37) explored the middle of the supposedly dichotomous sexual spectrum and reported it populated by a variety of "effeminate" men and "masculine" women marked by a continuum of genital abnormalities. A large clitoris was an "arrested penis" and a small penis a "hypertrophied clitoris," and both inclined their bearers away from the "type" of their sex.

Though nineteenth-century doctors denied, like Aristotle and his followers, the theoretical possibility of true human hermaphrodism, in practice the medical literature is replete with examples of ambiguous sexual identity. One of the most famous cases was that of Herculine Barbin, raised as a female, who worked as a governess and later as a teacher. According to the memoirs found after his suicide in 1868, Barbin fell ill and was examined by a doctor, who discovered testicles imbedded on either side of a shallow cul-de-sac that appeared for all the world to be a vagina, together with a rudimentary impermiform penis that could pass for a "voluminous" clitoris. Forced to change his civil status, Barbin lived the rest of his brief and unhappy life in a state of sexual indecision, suspended between his internal sense of female identity and his male persona. Although the experts cited his testicles as the deciding factor, the reasons that obliged them to decide at all were more legal than anatomical. According to Saint-Hilaire, there can be no sexual intermediaries, not because such do not exist in nature but because "our laws do not admit their existence or foresee their possibility."

But there is a deeper problem inherent in Laqueur's work than the implausibility of his one-sex, two-sex thesis, and it is owed to his admirable feminist commitments. In presenting the history of scientific research on sex as an attempt to justify a male-dominated social order, he ignores the extent to which many men, particularly homosexual men, fell afoul of the same theories, as Saint-Hilaire's remarks on effeminate men make clear. According to Laqueur, male scientists have always constructed the signs of sexual difference on women's "unstable" bodies. Taking their own bodies as the norm, they have projected ideas of imperfection or opposition onto female anatomy and physiology, rendering the male body transparent and a "history of man's body and its pleasures" probably impossible. By excluding men from his interpretation in this way, Laqueur not only flies in the face of the evidence, but also undermines his own praiseworthy effort to demonstrate the scope of the cultural construction of sexuality. From this point of view, his intellectual enterprise, far from being too ambitious, is not ambitious enough: like women's bodies, men's bodies also need to be liberated from the constraints of phallocentric science.

This loss of nerve accounts for what is certainly the most surprising aspect of Laqueur's description of the one-sex model: his claim that before the middle of the eighteenth century (and before the invention of woman as different from man), homoeroticism could not be seen as a violation of the natural heterosexual order, but only as a "culturally unacceptable reversal of power and prestige." Laqueur is right here, as elsewhere, to emphasize the latter: in sixteenth-century France and Spain, for example, only lesbians who usurped the male role by using a dildo received death sentences. But his interpretation forces him to ignore the vast body of theological, legal, and medical theory in the high Middle Ages and Renaissance that set procreative, heterosexual sex at the heart of the natural universe and associated sodomy with heresy, as a rejection of the physical and metaphysical order created by God. For this reason, both merited the unique penalty of burning at the stake.

In this area, as in many others, the continuities between Renaissance and nineteenth-century ideas are as striking as the contrasts. If medieval Aristotelians denied the existence of intermediate points between male and female on the sexual spectrum, many Renaissance writers (particularly those influenced by Hippocratic ideas) subscribed to the same vision as Saint-Hilaire. Men who exhausted their sexual resources or behaved in an effeminate way could slide toward the female end of the spectrum, and conversely for women. After the middle of the sixteenth century, these behaviorally and anatomically deviant types were increasingly identified with homosexuals, particularly male homosexuals, and eventually subjected to all the scorn that the medical establishment could heap upon them.

A few sympathetic doctors attempted heroic intervention. A French physician writing in the mid-nineteenth century, for example, tells us of a young medical student unable to maintain an erection during intercourse. The student had "Lilliputian" genitals, was effeminate, and spoke in an unusually high voice. Moved by his plight, the doctor fitted him with an ingeniously designed prosthesis that allowed him to feel during coitus the frictions that his organ was too small to provoke, and he prescribed as much sex "as his delicate constitution would bear," together with solid nourishment and light physical activity. After some time on this regime, the doctor was pleased to report, the patient's penis had increased perceptibly in size. As these examples suggest, men's bodies are also unstable. Men have historically held themselves to ideals of masculinity as unrealistic and coercive as anything they have imposed on women.

In the same vein, Laqueur's sensitivity to medical misogyny leads him to interpret the punitive literature concerning masturbation as primarily an assault on women, and to present Freud only as the perpetrator of a scheme to displace women's clitoral orgasms to their vaginas. But the medical devices for inhibiting masturbation in boys, while stopping short of castration—girls might receive clitorectomies—were notoriously brutal; and Freud, for all his enlightenment about homosexuality, spent his whole clinical life trying to "cure" unhappy inverts. The misogyny that underlies Western medical writing on sexuality is indeed staggering, and Laqueur has documented it with sympathy and passion, but this should not blind us to other forms of sexual intolerance, most notably the homophobia with which it was so frequently associated.

It is a further irony that Laqueur's sincere attempt to offer a feminist interpretation of his material ends up by obliterating not only homophobia from large portions of his narrative, but ultimately women themselves. His presentation of the one-sex model in particular assumes a patriarchy so hegemonic that even women speak with a male voice. One puts down the book with the distinct impression that women have been expunged from 2,300 years of medical writing about sex, surviving only in the ghostly forms of male ideological constructs. Laqueur's celebration of the premodern period as a time of somehow greater sexual indeterminacy and freedom reads in some respects like a male fantasy of a womanless world.

Still, there is a good deal to be learned from this well-meaning and occasionally brilliant book. Laqueur's analyses of particular problems and issues within the history of ideas on sex are often percep-

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tive and convincing—for example, his description of the Aristotelian account of conception as an attempt to ground paternity metaphysically in the absence of any clear physical link between father and child, or his discussion of nineteenth-century language that anthropomorphized the egg and sperm. He rightly calls attention to a marked decline in emphasis on female pleasure and desire over the period between 1600 and 1900, and to the ways in which that decline reflected the creation of a new (if equally procrustean) feminine ideal. And there is no doubt that the same period saw a dramatic, if gradual, transformation in thinking about sex and sex difference, rooted in a biologistic and medicalizing terminology that slowly supplanted the earlier metaphysical language. It is a transformation that has affected all our lives.

But it is important to know more than Laqueur tells us about why this happened, and about the context for these textual shifts. One part of that story belongs to the broader history of philosophy and religion, and reflects the gradual death of metaphysics in favor of an aggressive scientism that is still much with us. Another part belongs to political and social history, as Laqueur occasionally suggests. During the period in question, the public realm of political decision expanded dramatically in size, from narrow societies of kings and courtiers to national polities including middle-class men exercising their newly minted natural rights. Laqueur rightly indicates that the biological disfranchisement of women from this new public sphere was linked somehow to the natural rights claims of liberal and democratic political theory. Further research might tell us how definitions of legal capacity in civil and criminal law, new formulations of property rights and inheritance, and new conceptions of citizenship were related to the tendency to think about sexual difference in materialistic and anatomical terms, and thus to make the differences between men and women as great as the modern imagination and its new scientific lexicon would allow.

None of this means, however, that the gulf between the sexes was somehow greater or more unbridgeable after 1750 than before. Sex difference was as crucial a part of premodern mentality as it is of our own, though each historical epoch expressed this difference in language appropriate to its own cosmology. We find our hopes for a better, more tolerant, and more equitable world in different places. Laqueur projects his own hopes into the past, where he imagines men and women were somehow less constrained than they are now in shaping their sexual identities and expressing their sexual desires. Yet his book inspires a slightly different hope, to understand more completely how and why sex continues to be constructed in ways that perpetuate patriarchy and homophobia.

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Beyond Sentimentalism

BY CHRISTOPHER LASCH

Feminism without Illusions: A Critique of Individualism by Elizabeth Fox-Genovese

(University of North Carolina Press, 340 pp., $24.95)

Ever since an organized movement for women's rights came into being in the middle of the nineteenth century, feminists have advanced two quite different lines of argument. The first plays down the importance of sexual differences, asserting that "mind has no sex," in the words of a nineteenth-century advocate of women's rights. Women are the equals of men in every important respect, according to this way of thinking—that is, in every politically consequential respect. They are endowed with inalienable rights, and with the capacity to exercise those rights intelligently and responsibly. It is arbitrary, therefore, and unjust to deprive women of their legal and political rights, to deny them equal access to jobs and education, or to discriminate against them on any grounds at all.

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This kind of argument has all the strengths and weaknesses of liberal individualism. It makes a strong appeal to our sense of fair play, but it assumes that society is made up only of individuals, and that the state exists only to protect their rights. The case for equal rights (for women as for any other disfranchised class of citizens) depends on abstracting individuals from their social context. It slides too easily over the obvious and not so obvious differences between men and women, inviting the objection that individuals are formed by their experience as members of groups (including the two great biological groups into which humanity is divided, for better or worse) and that "mind" is not the only thing that has to be considered in discussions of sexual justice and the sexual division of labor.

These considerations, ignored by the argument from equal rights, can lead to a reassertion of women's inequality, or at least to a demand for separate "spheres"—a public sphere for men and a private one for women. An argument stressing sexual differences, on the other hand, can also lead to claims for the superiority, not merely for the equality, of the female sex. Nineteenth-century feminists, faced with the contention that participation in public life would unsex women and destroy the family, countered by insisting that the public world was badly in need precisely of maternal attention—that it was the manifest duty of women, instead of confining their nurturing activities to the home, to "make the whole world homelike," as Frances Willard put it. This line of argument, because it enlisted anti-feminist views of motherhood on behalf of feminist goals, turned out to be far more effective than arguments based on an abstract equality of rights.

In our time, the most celebrated example of the second type of feminism, which argues from sexual differences rather than from sexual similarities, is Carol Gilligan's claim that women speak "in a different voice," which is the voice of care and compassion. But the women's movement today depends even more heavily on this kind of thinking than it did a hundred years ago, and Gilligan is by no means alone in her contention that a society allegedly dominated by militarism, cutthroat competition, and environmentally destructive technologies needs the nurturing influence of women more desperately than ever before. The slogan of "sisterhood" captures this side of feminism.

Yet the other side is still much in evidence, most clearly perhaps in the defense of abortion on the grounds that a woman's right to her body is absolute and unconditional. Individualists are no longer content merely to advocate equal rights and equal opportunity. Instead they take the position that women's historic disabilities handicap them in public competition, and that preferential treatment is needed to overcome those disabilities. Much of contemporary feminism continues to rest on individualistic premises. Beneath the clamor for sisterhood and the celebration of "difference," it is possible to detect the persistence of liberal assumptions: that individuals are prior to society; that sexual identity (now understood as "gender") is "socially constructed"; and that for this reason it is essentially irrelevant to an appreciation of the true qualities that women can be expected to develop as individuals, once arbitrary classification by gender is done away with.

These individualistic misconceptions overlook much of human experience and make it difficult, moreover, to talk about the interests of society as a whole, as opposed to the interests of particular individuals or groups of individuals. Even when feminism seeks to escape from these misconceptions, however, it is handicapped by the lack of a clearly developed set of opposing ideas. This is one of the most important points to emerge from Elizabeth Fox-Genovese's new book, a tightly interlocking set of essays that takes vigorous exception, from a feminist point of view, to much of contemporary feminism.

According to Fox-Genovese, feminists have nothing to oppose to individualism except a sentimental conception of "community" as an island of tenderness in an otherwise heartless world. The idea that sisterhood can provide a communitarian alternative to competitive individualism, she argues, exaggerates the degree to which women are united by common interests, whereas in fact they are divided by class, racial, and ethnic barriers. It assumes that membership in a community of sisters—or in any other kind of community—is purely voluntary. It assumes, in other words, that communities are composed of like-minded individuals drawn together by nothing more than ties of love and friendship.

But we do not choose our grandparents, as Ludwig Borne (and later Horace Kallen) used to say. Communities shape us in ways that we are not free to reject, and they are held together not by love and friendship, but by descent, early training, and the enforcement of collective norms. Even those who come to rebel against those norms are marked for life by the communities in which they grow up. Fox-Genovese does not press the point, but the conclusion seems inescapable that communities must include institutional arrangements designed to preserve a given way of life and to pass it on from parents to children. Without providing for reproduction and cultural transmission, communities could survive for no more than a single generation—in which case it would be best not to speak of "communities" at all.

The individualistic assumptions underlying feminist thought betray themselves, then, in the anemic conception of communities that feminists like to play off against the "masculine" values they deplore. Like many Americans, feminists want the advantages of community life—emotional security, a sense of connection and rootedness, the comforts of home—without any of its inconveniences. As one who describes herself as "temperamentally and culturally conservative," Fox-Genovese has little patience with this kind of equivocation. "Most feminists who celebrate community," she writes, presumably with reference to Gilligan, Sara Ruddick, Adrienne Rich, and other theorists of sisterhood and "maternal thinking," as Ruddick calls it, envision "communities among women themselves"; but female communities cannot "offer a practical model for a society that still requires cooperation and fellowship across genders." Instead of strengthening communities, this kind of feminism may come to be seen as "having done the dirty work of capitalism—of having eroded the older communities and bourgeois institutions that blocked the way to a sinister despotism." A feminism that has so little understanding of communities may inadvertently encourage the "irreversible intrusion of the market into the so-called private sphere," and lead to the expansion of state controls as the only alternative to the old community controls.

If feminists are serious about communities, and not just sentimental about them, they will have to rethink their position on issues like abortion, pornography, and cultural "diversity." Such is the heart of Fox-Genovese's argument. She points out the difficulty of reconciling the feminist celebration of motherhood and community with a defense of abortion on "grounds of absolute individual right." Such arguments ignore society's stake in children. The definition of life, Fox-Genovese insists, cannot be left to individuals. Feminists attack the wall of privacy surrounding the family when it suits their purpose—when they wish to prevent wife-beating or child abuse, for example—but they defend abortion by

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appealing to the right of privacy. "Abortion," Fox-Genovese writes, "challenges feminists to come to terms with the contradictions in their own thought."

The debate about pornography poses a similar challenge. Her "residual Puritanism," as she calls it, makes Fox-Genovese sympathize with the call for censorship, but she rejects the "tortured perspective" of those who, like Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon, condemn pornography as an invasion of women's civil rights. "Rabid" and "shrill" claims of this kind, she maintains, "extend the concept of civil rights beyond all meaning." Here again, individualism interferes with an understanding of the social dimension of an issue like pornography. The best argument against pornography is not simply that it demeans women, corrupts children, or injures some other class of victims, but that it "offers us an unacceptable mirror of ourselves as a people," in Fox-Genovese's words.

For this reason, some commentators condemn pornography as a kind of pollution, which ought to be regulated on the grounds that it poisons our cultural atmosphere. Though she favors some kind of regulation herself, the nature and the scope of which remain unspecified, Fox-Genovese seems to reject this position too, arguing that "the harms of pornography affect women in particular." A more consistent critique of individualism, it seems to me, would take the position that pornography is an issue for all of us, not just for women, and that its bad effects lie in the way that it corrupts our public culture.

Since any condemnation of pornography is bound to raise the cry of censorship, it is essential, before a constructive debate on this issue can begin, to clarify the grounds on which pornography is objectionable in the first place. Fox-Genovese says that she would "ban the more extreme forms without a second thought, and with precious few worries about the public expressions of healthy sexuality that might be banned along with them." If this seems too casual, the point of her discussion is not to argue for or against censorship, but to lay the basis for a real debate. Her point, notwithstanding her own hesitation about the grounds on which pornography should be condemned, is that advocates of regulation have to demonstrate that morality is a public matter, not just a matter of private taste (except when someone is injured); and that what makes it public is the need for common standards, not just the possibility that pornography will infringe on women's "rights" or demean them in some other way. As Fox-

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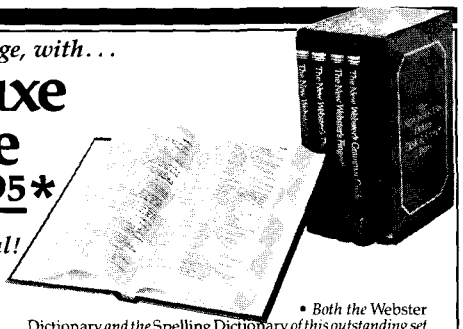

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Genovese herself observes, "A society unwilling or unable to trust to its own instinct in laying down a standard of decency does not deserve to survive and probably will not survive."

The recent campaign for "cultural diversity" in higher education raises a third set of issues that overlap with the issues raised by the debates about abortion and pornography. It is one thing to advocate expansion of the academic canon to include important works by women and minorities, but quite another thing, as Fox-Genovese makes clear, to attack the very notion of a canon—a list of works that make up the essence of our common culture and ought to be studied by everybody. Feminists are hardly alone in denouncing culture as a conspiracy of dead white males, but their eagerness to join the assault on cultural "elitism" and to "give every voice a hearing" betrays their inability to grasp the importance of common standards. Joan Scott, Jane Flax, Patricia Hill Collins, and a whole legion of "postmodernist" academics call for a "plurality of stories," in Scott's words, not merely on the grounds that any culture is made up of many voices, but on the further grounds that a common culture simply does not exist. Thus Hill explicitly rejects any attempt to integrate the culture of black women and its study into the "body of academic knowledge," as she puts it, since academic knowledge is automatically "suspect."

Fox-Genovese insists that such arguments are themselves "essentially academic." They are "inherently trivial" as well: curricular reform is not, as its advocates imagine, the cutting edge of social revolution. She unsparingly exposes the fraudulence of a radicalism that speaks from a "privileged position" in the university yet pretends to represent the "voice of the downtrodden." It is "nonsense," she writes, to view Western culture as purely the creation of elites. It "took shape against the backdrop of . . . a predominantly oral popular culture," and it always drew on the experience of those who were critical of the existing distribution of wealth and power.

For these reasons, and also because the canon embodied standards of excellence that transcended the interests or experience of any particular group, feminists should "take its claims seriously," as they did in the past. Those who welcome cultural fragmentation in the name of pluralism have lost the sense of "twoness," as W. E. B. Du Bois called it, that formerly shaped writers attempting to navigate between the subcultures in which they had been raised and the world culture they had acquired through education. Loyal at once to their own people and to the "republic of letters," writers like Du Bois knew that this painful tension between the particular and the universal, between popular culture and high culture, furnished a source of creative energy. "Much of the tension and conflict that characterize powerful writing," as Fox-Genovese reminds us, "derives from the need to mediate between the writer's 'mother' tongue and the language of formal culture." Today that tension is being lost in a "multiplicity of unrelated cultures and selves."

The strength of her analysis of academic politics lies in Fox-Genovese's ability to show that academic debates have larger repercussions, and that champions of cultural "diversity" draw on the same individualistic assumptions that inform debates about abortion and pornography. They talk as if culture could be reduced to an "infinite number of personal autobiographies." They are sentimentally attracted to the national cultures of Third World countries, but they can see nothing but oppression in our own national culture, even though they are themselves products of that culture and enjoy its blessings. An "ability to take pride in our national culture" can help women to "reclaim" it, according to Fox-Genovese. The decomposition of national cultures, on the other hand, is likely to lead to anarchy and its usual corrective, despotism. "The threatened decomposition of the Soviet Union and the Balkan states into their component warring nationalities offers scant promise of international stability, and the less immediately obvious, but nonetheless possible, decomposition of the United States offers no more."

Notwithstanding her appreciation of the need for a common culture, Fox-Genovese has a far more robust appreciation of diversity than those who take "difference" as their watchword. Above all, she respects the differences between men and women, and does not wish to abolish them. She rejects the position of feminists like Susan Moller Okin, who argues that "a just future would be one without gender." Such a prospect, Fox-Genovese writes, "leaves me cold." A world in which men and women had become "functionally interchangeable" would be flat and uninspiring. Sexual differences are undeniably a source of friction, and "those of us who accept the existence of fundamental differences between men and women suspect that at least some mutual hostility will always characterize relations between them." At the same time, however, the effort to enter imaginatively into the world of the other is the deepest source of cultural vitality.

A book that risks so much is obviously open to objections. Fox-Genovese occasionally allows herself to be carried away by the force of her own rhetoric, as when she speaks of the impending "decomposition of the United States." And her underlying argument, in spite of these rhetorical flourishes, is not always as forceful as it needs to be. It is not clear just where Fox-Genovese finally comes down on the question of censorship, or even why she objects to pornography at all. A more important ambiguity surrounds her discussion of community: on the one hand, she pleads for a strong, "constitutive," "corporatist" conception of community and argues that communities have to rest on more than personal inclination; and on the other hand she sees no hope of reconstructing "long-shattered communities of old types—whether those of puritan New England or the Old South or the Italian or Jewish sections of Chicago or New York."

Where does this leave us? Fox-Genovese offers no more than a hint. "The best of the old values and practices," she speculates in passing, "may yet be reinvigorated in new form, as prefigured by trade unions, universities, churches . . . that could be . . . encompassed in a new and essentially corporatist social vision." This language—"reinvigorated," "prefigured," "encompassed"—is overheated and vague, and the institutions enumerated are in any case large, impersonal organizations that no longer minister to the needs of particular communities. When Harvard College trained Puritan clergymen, it might have been appropriate to speak of Harvard as a community or a part of a community, but it is hard to see what sort of community is "prefigured" by Harvard or by any other university today. Churches took on the character of voluntary associations when they were disestablished long ago. As for labor unions, they were voluntary associations from the beginning, although unions once drew strength from the communities around them and identified themselves (as they seldom do today) with the defense of local autonomy against outside capital.

Communities that are "constitutive" and not merely "sentimental" require strong neighborhoods, and institutions directly responsible to neighborhood needs. Above all, they require strong families. Yet Fox-Genovese takes the position that a cultural conservatism based on defense of the family is "unacceptable," since the family gives men too much power over women. She advocates

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"medical and educational programs for all children," but this is a description of the welfare state, not a description of strong community. A proliferation of federal programs is really quite inconsistent with her contention that strong communities are the only alternative to the expansion of state controls over every phase of private life. It is abundantly clear, moreover, that children cannot take advantage of "medical and educational programs" unless they have plenty of support at home. It is precisely our growing appreciation of this point that has led to the current revulsion against the welfare state and to the rise of communitarianism as a prominent theme in recent social criticism.

This book, then, can hardly be taken as the last word on the conflict between individualism and communitarianism. Still, Fox-Genovese has written a courageous, clear-sighted book that feminists will have to reckon with for a long time to come. Perhaps it is not too much to hope that it will inaugurate a whole new stage in the long debate about men and women.

CHRISTOPHER LASCH is the author most recently of *The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics* (W. W. Norton).

The Generals in the Labyrinth

BY ALFRED KAZIN

Ulysses S. Grant:
Memoirs and Selected Letters, 1839-1865
edited by Mary Drake McFeely and William S. McFeely
(Library of America, 1,216 pp., $35)

William Tecumseh Sherman:
Memoirs of General W. T. Sherman
edited by Charles Royster
(Library of America, 1,154 pp., $35)

Fighting for the Confederacy: The Personal Recollections of General Edward Porter Alexander
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(University of North Carolina Press, 664 pp., $34.95)

The Civil War: An Illustrated History
by Geoffrey C. Ward with Ric Burns and Ken Burns
(Knopf, 450 pp., $50)

Only two national emergencies have involved the whole American people on its own soil: the Civil War and the Great Depression that ended with Pearl Harbor. The Civil War, to judge by our ceaseless racial friction and even war, has in one political sense never ended. Neither has the appeal of the stricken, violent, self-sacrificing patriotism on both sides that accepted more than a million casualties and was embodied, North and South, in religious conceptions of exclusive virtue. There is some question whether the Stars and Bars still so dear to Newt Gingrich and Jesse Helms reflect what Southern historians call "The Lost Cause, Baptized In Blood," or just election tactics. About the North, however, there is no question that, except for blacks and history-minded liberals who still regard it as unfinished business, as a Second American Revolution betrayed by Lincoln's party with the Gilded Age, the Civil War is now just picturesque, the greatest movie (and television series) ever made.

The old glory idea that once filled up

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American history was that North and South each believed itself worthy of self-sacrifice. Without sacrifice, the South would lack the independence that it needed to sustain its peculiar institution. Without the South, the North would be so hopelessly at odds within itself, and so tolerant of the slavery that would be extended by an independent South, that it would be second-rate, a section that was once a nation, and derided by all who once envied its democracy or hated it.

The popular Civil War historian Bruce Catton, who wrote dramatic books about the fighting based on regimental histories, said of Edmund Wilson's *Patriotic Gore* (1962), a wonderful literary presentation of the Civil War's leading actors, North and South, that reads like an American Plutarch: "That man knows everything about the Civil War except why it was fought." That is our situation now. Wilson had great literary gifts, but he also retained the kind of family tradition about the Union cause that once led hundreds of thousands to cherish the "Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant" when it was published in 1885-86 by Mark Twain, in two volumes that stood on every patriot's shelves.

Patriotic Gore, labored over for many years, appeared just in time for the war's centennial. But by 1962 Wilson was as sour on America as he was on Marxism and the Soviet Union (there had been a brief infatuation). He was now politically so much at odds with himself that, although Lincoln, Grant, and Sherman enthralled him as men, Lincoln's unyielding determination to keep this country together was put down as "religious mysticism." This was a judgment borrowed from Alexander H. Stephens, who as Confederate vice president was hot for states' rights, whatever the cost.

When Grant left the presidency and traveled in Europe, he met with Bismarck during the Congress of Berlin in 1878. Bismarck thought that the Union was the dominant "sentiment" behind Northern zeal. As William S. McFeely tells it in his superb biography of Grant, the American replied, "In the beginning, yes, but as soon as slavery fired upon the flag it was felt, we all felt, even these who did not object to slaves, that slavery must be destroyed. We felt that it was a stain to the Union that men should be bought and sold like cattle." Wilson, recounting the exchange between Bismarck and Grant, could not accept the historic fact that Grant had changed from the listless Democrat he had been before the war, that the war was in fact a revolution that transformed the North's (and Lincoln's) former acceptance of slavery so long as it was confined to the South. Wilson sneered that "slavery, on the part of the Unionists, has at the last moment been recruited to justify their action in the struggle for power." The struggle for power had become Wilson's only political grammar. In a woefully miscast introduction to *Patriotic Gore* that purported "to remove the whole subject from the plane of morality and to give an objective account of the expansion of the United States," Wilson compared Lincoln to Lenin.

Grant had come so well to recognize the wrong of slavery that he was actually glad, he told Bismarck, that the North had prolonged the war by having such poor generals in the first years. If his favorites, the superbly aggressive commanders Sherman and Sheridan, had first led the Army of the Potomac against Lee, the war would have been won so quickly, the Union reconstituted immediately, that slavery would have remained in force.

It was the terrible four-year struggle against an enemy holding out for slavery at any cost, equating slavery with its own "freedom," that led so many Northerners like Grant (and even Sherman, very leery of blacks at all times) to grow out of their old indifference to slavery. Recounting in his memoirs Lee's surrender at Appomattox on April 9, 1865, Grant could not rejoice "at the downfall of a foe who had fought so long and valiantly, and had suffered so much for a cause, though that cause was, I believe, one of the worst for which a people ever fought, and one for which there was the least excuse." And he concluded his book by saying, "The cause of the great war of the Rebellion against the United States will have to be attributed to slavery," and "It is probably well that we had the war when we did."

The fascination of Grant's memoirs lies in the truly personal overall view of the war by the general who is generally credited with having reversed the pattern of Union defeats up to 1863. First commanding in the "West," Grant defeated the Confederates at Port Hudson, Forts Henry and Donelson, and by taking Vicksburg, leaving the entire Mississippi in Union hands. If the *Personal Memoirs* have been likened for their detail and style to Caesar's *Commentaries*, it is probably because there are so few great accounts of war by the top commanders. Grant's associates in war found the same plain, sharp, unmistakable clarity and decisiveness in the memoirs that they valued in his war orders and dispatches. Grant the writer is always on top of events, totally immersed in the moment-to-moment necessities of war, always on the move.

Henry James said that Grant's letters (included here with the *Personal Memoirs*) were "as hard and dry as sandpaper . . . a ray of the hard limpidity of the writer's strong and simple autobiography." James did not understand what led his two younger abolitionist brothers in the Army to fight alongside ex-slaves—the appeal of war when it is fought for a real cause, the transforming power of action when everyone is strung up, bursting with fear and exaltation. As ex-Captain Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. told a Memorial Day gathering in 1884, "Through our great good fortune, in our youth our hearts were touched with fire." And it was Grant's famous and often terrible determination ("I explained to Meade that we did not want to follow the enemy; we wanted to get ahead of him") that first gave new spirit to the Army, and left him in history one of the most successful, because entirely implacable, commanders of all time.

Yet what a change the war wrought in Ulysses Grant, the diffident West Point graduate and young officer in the Mexican War who was such a hard-luck case that he once peddled wood in the street! He was 39, and entirely dependent on his detestable father in the family's leather and tanning shop in Galena, Illinois, when the South fired on Fort Sumter and gave Grant the chance that in three years led to his command of all Union forces and in seven years to the presidency of the United States. He had never

Gospel of Declarations by John the Theologian

Leave me alone. I came to Patmos on
a ship of spirit fashioned out of gold
and silver blood running in the python
trapped in the holy bowels of Jesus. Cold,
wet in my cave, I keep a wild carnation
beside my wooden pillow. Ecstasy!
I'm elsewhere. Sadly comes the Revelation.
Oblivion lost, I join the lightning tree:
the eyes of Seven Whales burn in my pen.
I curse the whores who don't love God, and hear
dogfish singing for waters of the sky.
I hear the slaves of sorrow, those poor men
in turquoise mines, their heart in trash and fear.
In my dark cave I see so I can die.

Willis Barnstone

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cared for soldiering, and was easily shaken by the sight of blood; his highest ambition had been to teach mathematics at West Point. His drinking at frontier posts before the war led to his resigning his commission.

In a pattern entirely characteristic of the generation that established itself through the Civil War—William Dean Howells summed it up as "the man who has risen"—this grimly moody, usually silent man, often enough dependent on drink, and on the ever present cigar that led to his death of throat cancer, turned out to be the steadiest and in fact the most brilliant of Union commanders. One general after another had led the Army of the Potomac to defeat—McDowell, McClellan, Pope, Burnside, Hooker—before Meade beat Lee at Gettysburg. But it was Grant who immediately commanded the Army when he was in full charge of everything else, who surrounded Lee to win the final victory.

Grant, the easiest man in the world to underrate and misjudge, remains something of a mystery to this day. Only the war provided the startling emergence of his gifts of leadership. As president, he was so dumb and so maladroit politically that he apologized to Congress. But directing the largest armies in history, Grant turned out to be far more than the "Butcher" that disaffected Northerners railed against. In an extraordinary memoir that has just come to light, for example, the Confederate general of artillery Edward Porter Alexander says that Grant's passage of the James River in 1864 was "the most brilliant stroke in all the campaigns of the war."

Grant was to display all his wartime endurance and determination, however, after leaving the presidency, when he proved so innocent in business that, a bankrupt stricken with throat cancer, he wrote the *Personal Memoirs* in order to provide for his destitute family. Mark Twain, his publisher, sent armies of subscription agents all over the North to sell the book. Not the least extraordinary thing about it is that Grant pushed on with the book even when he was voiceless, and simply refused to die until he had delivered the last pages.

The alternation of disaster and triumph in Grant's life is typical enough of American life and the business cycle. Perhaps only in the nineteenth century, when the great and terrible war created a pre-eminent modern nation where, as James M. McPherson says, there had been only a "union," could such a career have been possible. What is "personal" in the *Personal Memoirs* are the operations of Grant's military genius. His unexpected abilities, and his amazing weaknesses away from war, remain so special to himself—Henry Adams thought Grant's "reversion to type" disproved the theory of evolution!—as to make him one of the strangest figures in history.

Yet Grant is more representative of the war generation than Lincoln. "The man who has risen" (in this case, through the Army) typifies Sherman, at least in externals, and the future presidents Hayes, Garfield, and McKinley. It does not typify the Southern aristocrat Robert E. Lee, fifteen years older than Grant. Surrendering to Grant at Appomattox, the tall, handsome Lee in full uniform, wearing the ceremonial sword presented to him by Virginia, overwhelmed the short, grubby-looking Grant, in a private's uniform with the three stars of a lieutenant general. Grant went on and on offering reminiscences of life in the old Army and the Mexican War (Lee had been chief of staff to General Winfield Scott), until Lee had to remind Grant that he had come to surrender.

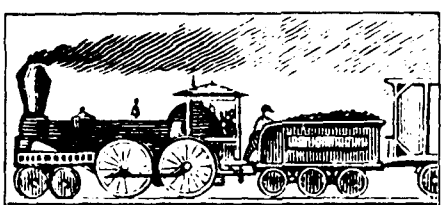
For all of his extraordinary physical magnetism and brilliance in battle (he was the most audacious commander since Napoleon, Confederates proudly asserted), Lee was, even at the outset of the war, a figure of the past. His reputation in the old Army was so high that he had been offered command of the Union Army. When, in April 1861, he resigned his commission to become Jefferson Davis's military adviser, Lee admitted to his sister:

> I recognize no necessity for this state of things.... With all my devotion to the Union and the feeling of loyalty and duty as an American citizen, I had not been able to make up my mind to raise my hand against my relatives, my children, my home.... Save in defense of my native state, I hope I may never be called on to draw my sword.

Lee triumphed as a strategist in a war that he did not expect to win. He was an anachronism even in his own eyes. The insistence on states' rights within the Confederacy seems to give a certain plausibility to the South's official case that it was fighting for "independence" from the North. But the South was near a closed society on the legitimacy of slavery even before the war; with the war, it became entirely so. There were no courts in the Confederacy to defend the slightest dissident opinion. Holding on to property in human beings in the name of its own "freedom" gave the South its strange rationale. With vastly inferior numbers and resources, it held the North at bay for fully four years. (Grant feared that morale in the North could not sustain another year of war.) The South sacrificed, as McPherson sums up in his new book, *Abraham Lincoln and the Second American Revolution*, a fourth of its white male population of military age, half of its farm machinery, two-fifths of its livestock, and much, much more. A Southern poet said in the Reconstruction period, "The greater part of our life is *not* living."

But what was the South fighting for? The proof that it was fighting for slavery (and, of course, the domination of another race, without which many human beings cannot be happy) is that the South had no reason not to rejoin the Union as soon as the war ended slavery. Before the war, the South had dominated the American political scene. Lincoln and Hamlin in 1860 were the first presidential candidates entirely from the North. The South had fostered the Mexican War and had dominated the presidency even when the Northerners Pierce and Buchanan were in the White House. It dominated the Supreme Court and the Army.

The South's determination to nationalize slavery hardened Northern opinion against it, though the North was firmly anti-abolitionist. This alone made Lincoln's ascendancy possible. Holding on to slavery at any cost and insisting that the North protect it, the South brought



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on the war as a response to Lincoln's election, though he lacked the will and the means to eliminate slavery. In the last desperate months of the war, the South even planned to conscript slaves as soldiers without giving them any assurance of freedom after the war. Black Union soldiers taken as prisoners were massacred, their white officers threatened with execution. The slightest disagreement with the "fire-eaters" became as dangerous as opposing Stalin and Hitler.

The South stood in the way of history. By doing so, it made it necessary for the imperiled Union to move into a revolution that was very far from Lincoln's original intention just to hold the Union together. Where the South claimed the right to possess, to sell, to separate, and to mutilate other human beings, Lincoln told Congress, as early as July 4, 1861, "This is essentially a people's contest. . . . It is a struggle for maintaining in the world that form and substance of government whose leading object is to elevate the condition of men—to lift artificial weights from all shoulders."

Still, by April 1864 an exhausted Lincoln was ready to admit that "I have not controlled events, and confess plainly that events have controlled me." This sense of being moved, shaken up, more or less transformed by history, is what gives the memoirs of the commanders Grant and Sherman their own equal and enduring fascination. These men were being led into unexpected storms of experience and thought, even as they were trying to hold on in the storm and determine its outcome. With each of them, the pre-war chapters in their memoirs fill out the proverbial picture of Americans as adventurers living their lives as a game of chance, going under and coming up again in the usual American story of boom and bust.

They were, of course, very different men. If Grant seemed an enigma even to his staff—the stiff and silent man could well have said with Napoleon, "My armies move as quickly as my thoughts"—his most obvious trait was his doggedness. When troops found themselves surrounded and panicked, he coolly told them, "We had cut our way in and could cut our way out." He became famous for demanding the "unconditional and immediate surrender" of his old Army pal Simon Bolivar Buckner. After Shiloh he was determined that nothing would do but "complete conquest." Unlike the early generals, who had counted on occupying Southern places rather than destroying enemy forces completely, who were comfortable with separate commands that allowed each general to fight without relation to overall strategy, Grant won Lincoln's heart by his determination. "That man fights." When given full command in April 1864, Grant made his armies "all ready to move for the accomplishment of a single object."

William Tecumseh Sherman, a West Pointer who never saw combat before Bull Run, became the most dramatic Northern commander through his ruthlessness, after seizing Atlanta and marching to the sea. He is now regarded as an originator of total war. He laid the South waste as he marched his "bummers" (foragers) north from Savannah to Goldsboro, North Carolina. But where Grant's steadiness at all times was a major asset—he had learned on his first engagement that the enemy was just as afraid of him as he was of the enemy—Sherman so panicked at one point in the struggle to keep Kentucky in the Union that he had to be given leave. In 1863, as he reports, he was called insane for his attack at Chickasaw Bayou.

Grant concluded his memoirs with lame and disjointed expressions of optimism about the future of the United States. He was in the last throes of cancer and dulled with drugs. Sherman typically concluded his memoirs with outrage at Secretary of War Stanton, who publicly humiliated him for giving the surrendering General Joseph Johnston more liberal terms than Grant had given Lee at Appomattox. (Sherman was sure he was following Lincoln's generous policy for reconstruction, but Lincoln was dead.) He proudly relates that he would not accept Stanton's hand when they met in the reviewing stand to overlook the Victory March of the Union armies down Pennsylvania Avenue, which took two full days.

As president, Grant followed the dictates of the Radical Republicans, but with the best will in the world he could not do all that they proposed to do for the easily cowed "freedmen." Sherman was never sympathetic to blacks. When war broke out in 1861, he was superintendent of the Louisiana State Military Academy, and on the friendliest terms with Southern "good society." He was to be remembered by the South as its cruelest enemy. But it is typical of Sherman's inability to hate the leaders of the "Great Rebellion" that when General Breckenridge surrendered to him, Sherman counseled Breckenridge—who had been vice president of the United States, had taken the most solemn oath to protect and defend the Constitution, and in taking up arms against his country had not only broken his oath but was technically guilty of treason—to get out of the country, and to advise Jefferson Davis to do the same.

Sherman seems, in his memoirs, more concerned than Grant with the welfare of his troops, with soldiers as individuals. He was proud of his "bummers" for so smashing up Southern railroads that they could never again be used. Sherman, from Ohio in the old West, identified himself with the careless, rangy, untidy look of his "Westerners." He worried about the appearance they would present at the Grand Review when compared with the Army of the Potomac. When the great day came, Sherman, who had departed the reviewing stand to lead his troops down the avenue, looked back and exulted over the formidable picture they made of the toughest, most rugged Americans.

Grant, though often in the field, could not, as a general-in-chief, mix with troops as intimately as Sherman did. Although he could order hundreds of thousands of men into battle, he was still sickened by the sight of blood. (On one occasion, forced to sleep in the rain under a tree, he sought shelter in a house where surgeons were busily amputating arms and legs. He went right back to his tree in the rain.) For a glimpse of individual soldiers on both sides, away from the majestic chess moves of commanders that dominate Grant's and Sherman's memoirs, there is no better place than *The Civil War: An Illustrated History* by Geoffrey C. Ward and Ric and Ken Burns, the companion volume to Ken Burns's eleven-hour documentary *The Civil War*. More than anything else except the charm and the knowledge of Shelby Foote, it was the lasting photographs and testimony of individual soldiers in the ranks that made for an unforgettable week's television in September. American television redeemed itself—for a week.

When it comes to "mere" history of the war, Foote's three-volume *The Civil War*, now available in Vintage paperback, is incomparable. Foote is a novelist, a Mississippian who has the most exquisite sympathy for both sides, and as an artillery officer in the Second World War he gained insight into the madness of war, which he added to his extraordinary day-by-day, hour-by-hour knowledge of the Civil War. But *The Civil War* is the only book I know that deserves to be called a "non-fiction novel." There is nothing like it in the non-specialist literature of the war. Watching Foote's easy, charming, often witty presence on television, I thought of how natural it is now for Southerners to be the best judges of the war in all its human costs. When asked why Southern writers were so many and so good, the late Walker Percy (who used

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to fight the Louisiana authorities for keeping the Confederate flag on display) replied, "Because we got beat."

If Northerners have never doubted that the South "got beat," or why, we now know that some Southerners in action were aware that they were flying in the face of history. A treasure of Civil War "personal memoirs" now published for the first time, General Edward Porter Alexander's *Fighting for the Confederacy*, is altogether livelier and more irreverent than anything in Grant's and Sherman's books; and it bitterly criticizes Stonewall Jackson—Stonewall himself!—for his actions at the Seven Days battles (June 26-July 2, 1862). Alexander denounces him for his "incredible slackness, and delay, and hanging back, which . . . decidedly slackened his own exertions, with the result that General Lee's victory was shorn of the capture of McClellan's entire army."

> The question naturally arises, what was the matter with him? . . . For myself, I think that the one defect in General Jackson's character as a Soldier was his religious beliefs. He believed, with absolute faith, in a personal God. . . . It is customary to say that "Providence did not intend that we should win," but . . . Providence did not care a row of pins about it. If it did, it was a very unintelligent Providence not to bring the business to a close—the close it wanted—in less than four years of most terrible and bloody war. . . . It was a serious incubus upon us that during the whole war our president and many of our generals really and actually believed that there *was* this mysterious Providence always hovering over the field . . . and that prayers and piety might win its favor from day to day.

Anyone acquainted with the South's defense of slavery on biblical lines, with the stupefying number of formal religious proclamations issued by Jefferson Davis, will recognize the long withheld wisdom in General Alexander's summing up of the war. "We had the right to fight, but our fight was against what might be called a Darwinian development—or an adaptation to changed and changing conditions—so we need not greatly regret defeat." What the cheerful Confederate did not say was that the South in defeat recouped itself religiously—as it was to do in literature. As the "Religion of the Lost Cause, Baptized In Blood," the creed became more sacred to itself than ever, a civic religion that lasted (pretty much up to 1920) as long as the poverty and "backwardness" of the South proved that its virtue in the sight of God was immemorial.

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TRB *continued from page 4*

the Iraq war has been sold to American citizens like every other major policy of the Reagan-Bush years: as, for most, a free lunch. Bush's State of the Union address contained all the right words: "the hard work of freedom . . . leadership brings burdens and sacrifice . . ." and so on. But the war has demanded nothing of the average American except to watch CNN. And in his speech, Bush contented himself with doling out more party favors like "tax-free family savings accounts" and the egregious capital gains tax cut.

The midst of a recession may well be the wrong time for a tax increase, but surely WASP morality dictates the *principle* that the war ought to be paid for by this generation and not the next. And not just the war. This was Bush's chance for true heroic fiscal leadership. At 82 percent in the polls, he could have called for a gas tax to promote conservation. Or, if any tax is anathema, he could have taken on middle-class entitlements. If ever there was a moment to call on citizens to sacrifice for their country's long-range good, this was it. But President WASP funked it.

The atmosphere in Washington is stiflingly triumphal. Not only are we going to win the war. We're going to win the peace, creating a "New World Order," and we're going to re-establish our country as No. 1 during the "Next American Century."

As E. L. Doctorow pointed out recently in *The Nation*, a genuine "new world order" would have been created if we had managed to repel aggression through global cooperation without resort to bloodshed—an opportunity Bush brilliantly forged then casually tossed away. A more traditional Pax Americana depends on the belief that we'll do it again. And that, in turn, seems to require that there be no serious cost in blood or money. Perhaps the combination of high-tech air power and hitting up "the allies" for cash can achieve this imperial alchemy. If not, Bush's "new world order" will become as haunted a phrase as Wilson's "war to end all wars."

The "next American century," too, depends on a willingness to sacrifice that is, to say the least, unproved. Is producing Patriot missiles or producing VCRs a better test of national greatness? That popular question misses the point. If George Bush were to announce that America will take on the "burden of leadership" by defending the world from evil while other nations concentrate on becoming more prosperous, that would indeed be greatness almost beyond WASP virtue. It would also be unsalable. But if the "next American century" is to find America No. 1 economically as well as militarily, it will require a degree of discipline George Bush is unprepared to summon even in wartime. These days, even war isn't the moral equivalent of war.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

CORRESPONDENCE *continued from page 2*

"serviced" in any way.

Of course, that would mean the end of campaign finance as we know it. Unfortunately, again I expect that TNR is overly optimistic in announcing that "the solution, in a word, is public financing." Largely because of Republican objections, public financing is not on the immediate horizon.

ERIC B. SCHNURER
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

McCarthy's lesson

To the editors:

In "Agents Provocative" (December 17), Eric Breindel is correct in stating that "mainstream historians have left virtually unexamined the question" of the harm done to the United States by officials who served as agents of the Soviet Union. Their averting their eyes is consistent with a wider neglect by most historians and political scientists of the role of espionage in international politics. The particular evasion here lies in a fashionable refusal to admit the intellectual arrogance of those who chose to work for Stalin against their own country.

Mr. Breindel recommends placing the activities of such Soviet agents as Alger Hiss and Harry Dexter White and others "in the appropriate historical context." Indeed, high time. But in no circumstance should any American believe that "Joseph McCarthy, perhaps even in his tactics, was essentially correct." Senator McCarthy did not mind that his bullying, his shotgun charges, his racy allegations were exploited by the press to inflame a gullible public. But he so befouled the evidence that when Whittaker Chambers and Elizabeth Bentley stood up to speak the truth it was Senator McCarthy—and McCarthyism—who gave them a bad name.

JOHN HORTON
Hollywood, Maryland

Eric Breindel replies:

My comments as to Senator McCarthy's tactics were offered in the spirit of a warning. I fear that a failure by mainstream historians to deal with the issue of Communist espionage may well—eventually—lead many Americans to conclude that Senator McCarthy was on the right track. This does not represent a conclusion I myself have drawn.

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NANTUCKET DIARIST

No man is an island

OVER-THE-AIR TV RECEPTION ON this island is bad in the best of times, and solid snow when your antenna is awry. So my wife and I are witnessing the Persian Gulf war the old-fashioned way: radio and newspapers. This does indeed (in keeping with post-Vietnam conventional wisdom) seem to make it easier to root for the troops. Blind to those CNN reports from war-torn Baghdad, I can enjoy allied successes without thinking much about "collateral damage," or, really, non-collateral damage. This doesn't mean there's no cognitive dissonance floating around here. I've been known to lament the deep-seated human capacity to devalue enemy life, so I do feel a bit awkward about the slight thrill I get upon hearing of downed Iraqi jets. Of course, I could always dress up my nationalistic impulses in enlightened terminology: Saddam Hussein's soldiers are a threat to world peace, and even if they *are* human beings, just like us, and even if their virulence isn't really *their* fault, the most humane course, in the long run, is to stop them by any means necessary. But I don't believe for a second that the thrill of victory comes from the part of my brain where elaborate cost-benefit analysis is conducted; we're dealing with tissue that goes way, way, back, well before the Paleolithic. In fact, my chauvinism is so deeply ingrained that I divide even allied casualties along tribal lines; I seem to cringe slightly less at British than at American losses. Good luck dressing *that* impulse up in tony language.

MANY, MAYBE MOST, AMERICANS would concede that if any of our men in arms had been born Iraqi, they'd be on the receiving end of the Pentagon technology right now. But try and put this logic into practice—suggest, say, a moment of silence at the Super Bowl for all those Iraqi soldiers getting bombed to death—and you will meet with resistance. And I don't just mean an unflinching resignation to the unfortunately necessary task of killing these men, but rather a scurrying to recover some real moral distinction between them and us. For example: maybe the Iraqi *conscripts* are innocent, but the Republican Guards, the ones beneath the B-52s, are willing, obedient, and sometimes brutal servants of Saddam Hussein. Well, yes, undeniably. But I'll bet that if you closely studied the life history of one of them, you would discover how an apparently innocent infant could be pulled and pushed by a host of forces—ranging from brothers to other role models to peer pressure to status anxiety to foreclosed career alternatives to blind adolescent ambition—into eager enlistment in a bad cause. And suppose you found the opposite: that this kid was actually a bad seed, a ruthless monster from age one. So what? Presumably his ruthlessness was due to *something*: something in his earliest environment, or in his genes, or (more realistically) some interplay of the two. Are these things his fault? Should he be killed for them?

IF SPACE PERMITTED me to sustain this Socratic monologue, I would wind my way ever so gradually to the following stark assertions. (1) All human behavior is determined jointly by genes and environment, beginning nine months before birth, so in some deep sense we are all morally blameless for our actions. (2) Sure, people must, as a practical matter, get blamed and punished, to discourage future misdeeds by them and others, but there is nothing good, *in itself*, about any suffering thus inflicted; there is never any moral value in sheer retribution. Of course, if you didn't buy this stuff back during dorm-room debates on free will, you probably won't buy it now. So I don't expect you to follow me all the way to the conclusion that Saddam Hussein is himself ultimately blameless, and should (in principle) be killed with some moral regret, the way you might shoot a rabid dog. But you can stop short of my philosophical extremism and still agree that, if we must kill all these Iraqi soldiers, we should at least try not to revel in their deaths.

MAYBE YOU SHOULD KEEP ALL this wisdom under your hat. A nation needs chauvinism to win wars, so mass enlightenment has the ironic property of steadily ceding all struggles to the morally primitive (e.g., Saddam Hussein). Not a good trend. Still, it would be nice if in the White House, at least, the idea of retribution were seen accurately as a vestige of natural history, and all human suffering were seen as at some level unfortunate. Thus, before deciding to start this war, President Bush might have pondered, under the label "downside," the deaths of thousands and thousands of Iraqi soldiers, each of whom is the moral equivalent of any of his sons (with the possible exception of Neil). Yes, of course: as long as wars exist, nations must fight them under the pretense that enemy life has substandard value. But couldn't we give enemies *some* moral value? Say, .01 of an American? Or, at least, .01 of a Brit?

UNUSUALLY ATTENTIVE TNR READers may recall that several months ago I argued against all-out war. I said we should simply subject Iraq to a few days of air strikes—setting back its nuclear and chemical arms programs, and emasculating its military—and then revert to economic sanctions, with Kuwait still under Iraq's control. My main point was that only an assault this neat and politically cheap would be plausibly replicable the next time a dictator was contemplating an invasion likely to outrage the world. Basically, I was saying we should sacrifice Kuwait for the sake of all future Kuwaits. As I write, no ground attack is yet under way, and allied casualties are low. But the war is nonetheless passing the point of plausible replicability. The oil spill alone will indelibly taint this whole exercise. And even if we manage to bomb the Iraqis out of Kuwait, with few allied casualties on the ground, the eventual photographs of mounds of Iraqi bodies—the bodies already piling up in the trenches, temporarily beyond camera range—will leave many Americans feeling correctly appalled. (One of the quirky things about our species' moral sentiments is that, after inspiring the slaughter of thousands, they can turn around and shower sympathy on the corpses. Better late than never, I guess.) There's no telling how messy things will eventually get in the Gulf, but it's already doubtful that the next major invasion of a helpless country will be greeted by the global refrain, "Hey, let's just do another Desert Storm!" In defending this war, Bush professes to have done a lot of ratiocinating about building a new world order, complete with the rule of law and a potent United Nations. God knows the time was ripe for such thinking. But when push came to shove, he was moved by something deeper and older than thought.

ROBERT WRIGHT

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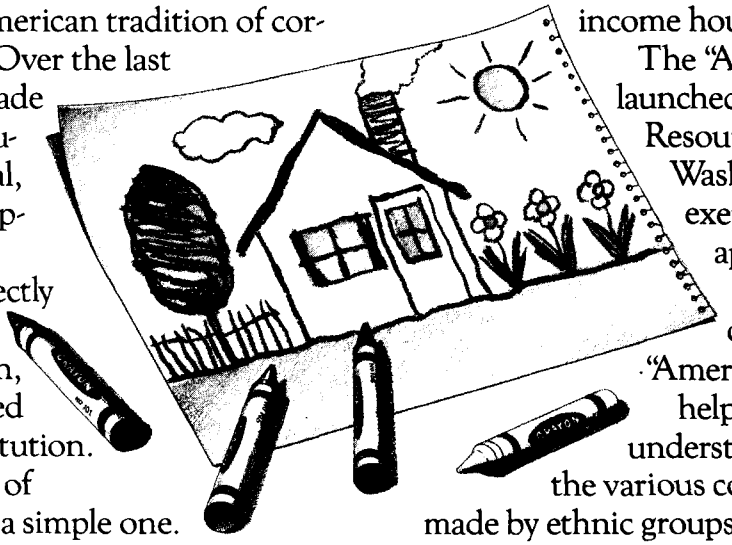

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